ſolennem magiſtratum, qui duci Humfrido Gloceſtriæ, ſtante minore ætate regis Henrici, ut regni protector appellaretur, olim contingebat. Eâ igitur auctoritate uſus eſt, de conſenſu & beneplacito *omnium dominorum*." p. 556.

Thus far therefore it muſt be allowed that Richard acted no illegal part, nor diſcovered more ambition than became him. He had defeated the queen's innovations, and ſecured her accomplices. To draw off our attention from ſuch regular ſteps, ſir Thomas More has exhauſted all his eloquence and imagination to work up a piteous ſcene, in which the queen is made to excite our compaſſion in the higheſt degree, and is furniſhed by that able pen with ſtrains of pathetic oratory, which no part of her conduct affords us reaſon to believe ſhe poſſeſſed. This ſcene is occaſioned by the demand of delivering up her ſecond ſon. Cardinal Bourchier, archbiſhop of Canterbury, is the inſtrument employed by the protector to effect this purpoſe. The fact is confirmed by Fabian in his rude and brief manner, and by the Chronicle of Croyland, and therefore cannot be diſputed. But though the latter author affirms that force was uſed to oblige the cardinal to take that ſtep, he by no means agrees with ſir Thomas More in the repugnance of the queen to comply, nor in that idle diſcuſſion on the privileges of ſanctuaries, on which ſir Thomas has waſted ſo many words. On the contrary, the Chronicle declares, that the queen "verbis gratanter annuens, dimiſit puerum." The king, who had been lodged in the palace of the biſhop of London, was now removed with his brother to the Tower.

This laſt circumſtance has not a little contributed to raiſe horror in vulgar minds, who of late years have been accuſtomed to ſee no perſons of rank lodged in the Tower but ſtate criminals. But in that age the caſe was widely different. It not only appears by a map engraven ſo late as the reign of queen Elizabeth, that the Tower was a royal palace, in which were ranges of buildings called the king's and queen's apartments, now demoliſhed; but it is a known fact, that they did often lodge there, eſpecially previous to their coronations. The queen of Henry the ſeventh lay-in there: queen Elizabeth went thither after her triumphant entry into the city; and many other inſtances might be produced: but for brevity I omit them, to come to one of the principal tranſactions of this dark period: I mean Richard's aſſumption of the crown. Sir Thomas More's account of this extraordinary event is totally

totally improbable, and poſitively falſe in the ground-work of that revolution. He tells us, that Richard meditating uſurpation, divided the lords into two ſeparate councils, aſſembling the king's or queen's party at Baynard's caſtle, but holding his own private junto at Croſby-place. From the latter he began with ſpreading murmurs, whiſpers, and reports againſt the legality of the late king's marriage.—Thus far we may credit him—but what man of common ſenſe can believe, that Richard went ſo far as publicly to aſperſe the honour of his own mother? That mother, Cecily ducheſs dowager of York, a princeſs of a ſpotleſs character, was then living: ſo were two of her daughters, the ducheſſes of Suffolk and Burgundy, Richard's own ſiſters: one of them, the ducheſs of Suffolk, walked at his enſuing coronation, and her ſon the earl of Lincoln was by Richard himſelf, after the death of his own ſon, declared heir apparent to the crown. Is it, can it be credible, that Richard actuated a venal preacher * to declare to the people from the pulpit at Paul's croſs, that his mother had been an adultereſs, and that her two eldeſt ſons †, Edward the fourth and the duke of Clarence ‡, were ſpurious? and that the good lady had not given a legitimate child to her huſband but the protector, and I ſuppoſe the ducheſs of Suffolk, though no mention is ſaid to be made of her in the ſermon? For as the ducheſs of Suffolk was older than Richard, and conſequently would have been involved in the charge of baſtardy, could he have declared her ſon his heir, he who ſet aſide his brother's children for their illegitimacy? Ladies of the leaſt diſputable gallantry generally ſuffer their huſband to beget his heir; and if doubts ariſe on the legitimacy of their iſſue, the younger branches ſeem moſt liable to ſuſpicion. But a tale ſo groſs could not have paſſed even on the mob:—no proof, no preſumption of

* What ſhould we think of a modern hiſtorian, who ſhould ſink all mention of the convention parliament, and only tell us that one doctor Burnet got up into the pulpit, and aſſured the people that Henrietta Maria (a little more ſuſpected of gallantry than ducheſs Cecily) produced Charles the ſecond and James the ſecond in adultery, and gave no legitimate iſſue to Charles the firſt but Mary princeſs of Orange, mother of king William; that the people laughed at him, and ſo the prince of Orange became king?

† The earl of Rutland, another ſon, elder than Richard, had been murthered at the battle of Wakefield, and ſo was omitted in that imaginary accuſation.

‡ Clarence is the firſt who is ſaid to have propagated this ſlander; and it was much more conſonant to his levity and indigeſted politics, than to the good ſenſe of Richard. Who can believe that Richard renewed this ſtory, eſpecially as he muſt have altered the dates of his mother's amours, and made them continue to her conception of him, as Clarence had made them ſtop in his own favour?

the fact was pretended. Were the * ducheſs and her daughters ſilent on ſo ſcandalous an inſinuation? Agrippina would ſcarce have heard it with patience. Moriar modo imperet! ſaid that empreſs in her wild wiſh of crowning her ſon: but had he, unprovoked, aſperſed her honour in the open forum, would the mother have ſubmitted to ſo unnatural an inſult? In Richard's caſe the imputation was beyond meaſure atrocious and abſurd. What! taint the fame of his mother to pave his way to the crown! Who had heard of her guilt? And if guilty, how came ſhe to ſtop the career of her intrigues? But Richard had better pretenſions, and had no occaſion to ſtart doubts even on his own legitimacy, which was too much connected with that of his brothers to be toſſed and bandied about before the multitude. Clarence had been ſolemnly attainted by act of parliament, and his children were out of the queſtion. The doubts on the validity of Edward's marriage were better grounds for Richard's proceedings than aſperſion of his mother's honour. On that invalidity he claimed the crown, and obtained it; and with ſuch univerſal concurrence, that the nation undoubtedly was on his ſide:—but as he could not deprive his nephews on that foundation, without baſtardizing their ſiſters too, no wonder the hiſtorians who wrote under the Lancaſtrian domination, have uſed all their art and induſtry to miſrepreſent the fact. If the marriage of Edward the fourth with the widow Grey was bigamy, and conſequently null, what became of the title of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry the ſeventh? What became of it? Why, a baſtard branch of Lancaſter, matched with a baſtard of York, were obtruded on the nation as the right heirs of the crown; and, as far as two negatives can make an affirmative, they were ſo.

* It appears from Rymer's Fœdera, that the very firſt act of Richard's reign is dated from quadam alterâ camerâ juxta capellam in hoſpitio dominæ Ceciliæ ducisſæ Eborum. It does not look much as if he had publicly accuſed his mother of adultery, when he held his firſt council at her houſe. Among the Harleian MSS. in the Muſeum, N° 2236, art. 6, is the following letter from Richard to this very princeſs his mother, which is an additional proof of the good terms on which they lived: "Madam, I recomaunde me to you as hertely as is to me poſſible, beſeching you in my moſt humble and affectuouſe wiſe of your daly bleſſing to my ſynguler comfort and defence in my nede; and, madam, I hertely beſeche you, that I may often here from you to my comfort; and ſuche newes as be here, my ſervaunt Thomas Bryan this berer ſhall ſhowe you, to whom pleaſe it you to yeve credence unto. And, madam, I beſeche you to be good and graciouſe lady to my lord my chamberlayn to be your officer in Wiltſhire in ſuche as Colinbourne had: I truſt he ſhall therin do you good ſervyce; and that it pleſe you, that by this berer I may underſtande your pleaſur in this behalve. And I praye God ſende you th' accompliſhement of your noble deſires. Written at Pountfreit, the thirde day of Juyn, with the hande of your moſt humble ſon,

Ricardus Rex."

Buck,

Buck, whoſe integrity will more and more appear, affirms that, before Edward had eſpouſed the lady Grey, he had been contracted to the lady Eleanor Butler, and married to her by the biſhop of Bath. Sir Thomas More, on the contrary (and here it is that I am unwillingly obliged to charge that great man with wilful falſehood), pretends that the ducheſs of York, his mother, endeavouring to diſſuade him from ſo diſproportionate an alliance, urged him with a pre-contract to one Elizabeth Lucy, who however, being preſſed, confeſſed herſelf his concubine; but denied any marriage. Doctor Shaw too, the preacher, we are told by the ſame authority, pleaded from the pulpit the king's former marriage with Elizabeth Lucy; and the duke of Buckingham is ſaid to have harangued the people to the ſame effect. But now let us ſee how the caſe really ſtood: Elizabeth Lucy was the daughter of one Wyat of Southampton, a mean gentleman, ſays Buck, and the wife of one Lucy, as mean a man as Wyat. The miſtreſs of Edward ſhe notoriouſly was; but what if, in Richard's purſuit of the crown, no queſtion at all was made of this Elizabeth Lucy? We have the beſt and moſt undoubted authorities to aſſure us, that Edward's pre-contract or marriage, urged to invalidate his match with the lady Grey, was with the lady Eleanor Talbot, widow of the lord Butler of Sudely, and ſiſter of the earl of Shrewſbury, one of the greateſt peers in the kingdom; her mother was the lady Katherine Stafford, daughter of Humphrey duke of Buckingham, prince of the blood: an alliance in that age never reckoned unſuitable. Hear the evidence. Honeſt Philip de Comines ſays*, "that the biſhop of Bath informed Richard, that he had married king Edward to an Engliſh lady; & dit cet eveſque qu'il les avoit eſpouſes, & que n'y avoit que luy & ceux deux." This is not poſitive, and yet the deſcription marks out the lady Butler, and not Elizabeth Lucy. But the Chronicle of Croyland is more expreſs. "Color autem introitus & captæ poſſeſſionis hujuſmodi is erat. Oſtendebatur per modum ſupplicationis in quodam rotulo pergameni quod filii regis Edwardi erant baſtardi, ſupponendo illum precontraxiſſe cum quâdam dominâ Alienorâ Boteler, antequam reginam Elizabeth duxiſſet uxorem; atque inſuper, quod ſanguis alterius

* Liv. 5, p. 151. In the 6th book, Comines inſinuates that the biſhop acted out of revenge for having been impriſoned by Edward. It might be ſo; but as Comines had before alleged that the biſhop had actually ſaid he had married them, it might be the truth that the prelate told out of revenge, and not a lie; nor is it probable that his tale would have had any weight, if falſe, and unſupported by other circumſtances.

fratris

fratris ſui, Georgii ducis Clarentiæ, fuiſſet attinctus; ita quod hodie nullus certus & incorruptus ſanguis linealis ex parte Richardi ducis Eboraci poterat inveniri, niſi in perſonâ dicti Richardi ducis Gloceſtriæ. Quo circa ſupplicabatur ei in fine ejuſdem rotuli, *ex parte dominorum & communitatis regni*, ut jus ſuum in ſe aſſumeret." Is this full? Is this evidence? Here we ſee the origin of the tale relating to the ducheſs of York; *nullus certus & incorruptus ſanguis* from theſe miſtaken or perverted words flowed the report of Richard's aſperſing his mother's honour. But as if truth was doomed to emerge, though ſtifled for near three hundred years, the roll of parliament is at length come to light (with other wonderful diſcoveries), and ſets forth, "that though *the three eſtates* which petitioned Richard to aſſume the crown were not aſſembled in form of parliament;" yet it rehearſes the ſupplication (recorded by the Chronicle above), and declares, "that king Edward was and ſtood married and troth plight to one dame Eleanor Butler, daughter to the earl of Shrewſbury, with whom the ſaid king Edward had made a pre-contract of matrimony, long before he made his pretended marriage with Elizabeth Grey." Could ſir Thomas More be ignorant of this fact? Or, if ignorant, where is his competence as an hiſtorian? And how egregiouſly abſurd is his romance of Richard's aſſuming the crown in conſequence of doctor Shaw's ſermon and Buckingham's harangue, to neither of which he pretends the people aſſented! Doctor Shaw no doubt tapped the matter to the people; for Fabian aſſerts that he never durſt ſhew his face afterwards; and as Henry the ſeventh ſucceeded ſo ſoon, and as the ſlanders againſt Richard increaſed, that might happen: but it is evident that the nobility were diſpoſed to call the validity of the queen's marriage in queſtion, and that Richard was ſolemnly invited by the three eſtates to accept the regal dignity; and that is farther confirmed by the Chronicle of Croyland, which ſays that Richard, having brought together a great force from the north, from Wales and other parts, did on the twenty-ſixth of June claim the crown, "ſeque eodem die apud magnam aulam Weſtmonaſterij in cathedram marmoream ibi intruſit;" *but* the ſupplication afore-mentioned had firſt been preſented to him. This will no doubt be called violence and a force laid on the three eſtates; and yet that appears by no means to have been the caſe; for ſir Thomas More, partial as he was againſt Richard, ſays, "that to be ſure of all enemies, he ſent for five thouſand men out of the north againſt his coronation, which came up evill apparelled and worſe harneſſed, in ruſty harneſſe, neither defenſable

ſenſable nor ſcoured to the ſale, which muſtered in Finſbury field, to the great diſdain of all lookers on." Theſe ruſty companions, deſpiſed by the citizens, were not likely to intimidate a warlike nobility; and had force been uſed to extort their aſſent, ſir Thomas would have been the firſt to have told us ſo. But he ſuppreſſed an election that appears to have been voluntary, and invented a ſcene, in which, by his own account, Richard met with nothing but backwardneſs and ſilence, that amounted to a refuſal. The probability therefore remains, that the nobility met Richard's claim at leaſt half-way, from their hatred and jealouſy of the queen's family, and many of them from the conviction of Edward's pre-contract. Many might concur from provocation at the attempts that had been made to diſturb the due courſe of law, and ſome from apprehenſion of a minority. This laſt will appear highly probable from three ſtriking circumſtances that I ſhall mention hereafter. The great regularity with which the coronation was prepared and conducted, and the extraordinary concourſe of the nobility at it, have not at all the air of an unwelcome revolution, accompliſhed merely by violence. On the contrary, it bore great reſemblance to a much later event, which, being the laſt of the kind, we term *The Revolution*. The three eſtates of nobility, clergy, and people, which called Richard to the crown, and whoſe act was confirmed by the ſubſequent parliament, trod the ſame ſteps as the convention did which elected the prince of Orange; both ſetting aſide an illegal pretender, the legitimacy of whoſe birth was called in queſtion. And though the partiſans of the Stuarts may exult in my comparing king William to Richard the third, it will be no matter of triumph, ſince it appears that Richard's cauſe was as good as king William's, and that in both inſtances it was a free election. The art uſed by ſir Thomas More (when he could not deny a pre-contract) in endeavouring to ſhift that objection on Elizabeth Lucy, a married woman, contrary to the ſpecific words of the act of parliament, betrays the badneſs of the Lancaſtrian cauſe, which would make us doubt or wonder at the conſent of the nobility in giving way to the act for baſtardizing the children of Edward the fourth. But reinſtate the claim of the lady Butler, which probably was well known, and conceive the intereſt that her great relations muſt have made to ſet aſide the queen's marriage, nothing appears more natural than Richard's ſucceſſion. His uſurpation vaniſhes, and in a few pages more I ſhall ſhew that his conſequential cruelty vaniſhes too, or at moſt is very problematic: but firſt I muſt revert to ſome intervening circumſtances.

In

In this whole ſtory nothing is leſs known to us than the grounds on which lord Haſtings was put to death. He had lived in open enmity with the queen and her family, and had been but newly reconciled to her ſon the marquis Dorſet; yet ſir Thomas owns that lord Haſtings was one of the firſt to abet Richard's proceedings againſt her, and concurred in all the protector's meaſures. We are amazed therefore to find this lord the firſt ſacrifice under the new government. Sir Thomas More ſuppoſes (and he could only ſuppoſe, for, whatever archbiſhop Morton might tell him of the plots of Henry of Richmond, Morton was certainly not entruſted with the ſecrets of Richard), ſir Thomas, I ſay, ſuppoſes that Haſtings either withſtood the depoſition of Edward the fifth, or was accuſed of ſuch a deſign by Cateſby, who was deeply in his confidence; and he owns that the protector *undoubtedly loved him well, and loth he was to have him loſt.* What then is the preſumption? Is it not, that Haſtings really was plotting to defeat the new ſettlement contrary to the intention of the three eſtates? And who can tell whether the ſuddenneſs of the execution was not the effect of neceſſity? The gates of the Tower were ſhut during that rapid ſcene; the protector and his adherents appeared in the firſt ruſty armour that was at hand: but this circumſtance is alleged againſt them, as an incident contrived to gain belief, as if they had been in danger of their lives. The argument is gratis dictum; and as Richard loved Haſtings and had uſed his miniſtry, the probability lies on the other ſide: and it is more reaſonable to believe that Richard acted in ſelf-defence, than that he exerciſed a wanton, unneceſſary, and diſguſting cruelty. The collateral circumſtances introduced by More do but weaken * his account, and take from its probability. I do not mean the ſilly recapitulation of ſilly omens which forewarned Haſtings of his fate, and, as omens generally do, to no manner of purpoſe; but I ſpeak of the idle accuſations put into the mouth of Richard, ſuch as his baring his withered arm, and imputing it to ſorcery,

* Except the proclamation which ſir Thomas ſays appeared to have been prepared before hand. The death of Haſtings, I allow, is the fact of which we are moſt ſure, without knowing the immediate motives: we muſt conclude it was determined on his oppoſing Richard's claim: farther we do not know, nor whether that oppoſition was made in a legal or hoſtile manner. It is impoſſible to believe, that an hour before his death he ſhould have exulted in the deaths of their common enemies, and vaunted, as ſir Thomas More aſſerts, his connexion with Richard, if he was then actually at variance with him; nor that Richard ſhould, without provocation, have maſſacred ſo excellent an accomplice. This ſtory, therefore, muſt be left in the dark, as we find it.

and to his blending the queen and Jane Shore in the ſame plot. Cruel or not, Richard was no fool; and therefore it is highly improbable that he ſhould lay the withering of his arm on recent witchcraft, if it was true, as ſir Thomas More pretends, that it never had been otherwiſe.—But of the blemiſhes and deformity of his perſon I ſhall have occaſion to ſpeak hereafter. For the other accuſation of a league between Elizabeth and Jane Shore, ſir Thomas More ridicules it himſelf, and treats it as highly unlikely. But, being unlikely, was it not more natural for him to think that it never was urged by Richard? And though ſir Thomas again draws aſide our attention by the penance of Jane, which ſhe certainly underwent, it is no kind of proof that the protector accuſed the queen of having plotted * with miſtreſs Shore. What relates to that unhappy fair one I ſhall examine at the end of this work.

The very day on which Haſtings was executed, were beheaded earl Rivers, lord Richard Grey, Vaughan, and Haute. Theſe executions are indubitable; were conſonant to the manners and violence of the age; and perhaps juſtifiable by that wicked code, ſtate-neceſſity. I have never pretended to deny them, becauſe I find them fully authenticated. I have in another place † done juſtice to the virtues and excellent qualities of earl Rivers: let therefore my impartiality be believed, when I reject other facts, for which I can diſcover no good authority. I can have no intereſt in Richard's guilt or innocence; but as Henry the ſeventh was ſo much intereſted to repreſent him as guilty, I cannot help imputing to the greater uſurper, and to the worſe tyrant of the two, all that appears to me to have been calumny and miſrepreſentation.

All obſtacles thus removed, and Richard being ſolemnly inſtated in the throne by the concurrent voice of the three eſtates, "He openly," ſays ſir

* So far from it, that, as Mr. Hume remarks, there is in Rymer's Fœdera a proclamation of Richard, in which he accuſes, not the lord Haſtings, but the marquis Dorſet, of connection with Jane Shore. Mr. Hume thinks ſo authentic a paper not ſufficient to overbalance the credit due to ſir Thomas More. What little credit was due to him appears from the courſe of this work in various and indubitable inſtances. The proclamation againſt the lord Dorſet and Jane Shore is not dated till the 23d of October following. Is it credible that Richard would have made uſe of this woman's name again, if he had employed it before to blacken Haſtings? It is not probable that, immediately on the death of the king, ſhe had been taken into keeping by lord Haſtings; but near ſeven months had elapſed between that death and her connection with the marquis.

† In the Catalogue of royal and noble authors, vol. 1.

Thomas More, "took upon him to be king the * ninth day of June, and the morrow after was proclaimed, riding to Weſtminſter with great ſtate; and calling the judges before him, ſtraitly commanded them to execute the laws without favour or delay, with many good exhortations, of the which he followed not one." This is an invidious and falſe accuſation. Richard, in his regal capacity, was an excellent king, and for the ſhort time of his reign enacted many wiſe and wholeſome laws. I doubt even whether one of the beſt proofs of his uſurpation was not the goodneſs of his government, according to a common remark, that princes of doubtful titles make the beſt maſters, as it is more neceſſary for them to conciliate the favour of the people: the natural corollary from which obſervation need not be drawn. Certain it is, that in many parts of the kingdom, not poiſoned by faction, he was much beloved; and even after his death the northern counties gave open teſtimony of their affection to his memory.

On the ſixth of July Richard was crowned, and ſoon after ſet out on a progreſs to York, on his way viſiting Glouceſter, the ſeat of his former duchy. And now it is that I muſt call up the attention of the reader, the capital and bloody ſcene of Richard's life being dated from this progreſs. The narrative teems with improbabilities and notorious falſehoods, and is flatly contradicted by ſo many unqueſtionable facts, that, if we have no other reaſon to believe the murder of Edward the fifth and his brother, than the account tranſmitted to us, we ſhall very much doubt whether they ever were murdered at all. I will ſtate the account, examine it, and produce evidence to confute it, and then the reader will form his own judgment on the matter of fact.

Richard, before he left London, had taken no meaſures to accompliſh the aſſaſſination; but, on the road, "his mind miſgave him †, that while his nephews lived he ſhould not poſſeſs the crown with ſecurity. Upon this reflection he diſpatched one Richard Greene to ſir Robert Brakenbury, lieutenant of the Tower, with a letter and credence alſo, that the ſame ſir Robert in any wiſe ſhould put the two children to death. This John Greene did his errand to Brakenbury, kneeling before our Lady in the Tower, who

* Though I have copied our hiſtorian, as the reſt have copied him, in this date, I muſt deſire the reader to take notice, that this very date is another of ſir T. More's errors; for in the public acts is a deed of Edward the fifth, dated June 17.

† Sir Thomas More.

plainly

plainly anſwered that he never would put them to death, to dye therefore." Greene returned with this anſwer to the king, who was then at Warwick, wherewith he took ſuch diſpleaſure and thought, that the ſame night he ſaid unto a ſecret page of his, "Ah! whom ſhall a man truſt? They that I have brought up myſelf, they that I thought would have moſt ſurely ſerved me, even thoſe fail me, and at my commandment will do nothing for me." "Sir," quoth the page, "there lieth one in the palet-chamber without, that I dare ſay will doe your grace pleaſure; the thing were right hard that he would refuſe;" meaning this by James Tirrel, whom, ſays ſir Thomas a few pages afterwards, as men ſay, he there made a knight. "The man," continues More, "had an high heart, and ſore longed upwards, not riſing yet ſo faſt as he had hoped, being hindered and kept under by ſir Richard Ratcliffe and ſir William Cateſby, who by ſecret drifts kept him out of all ſecret truſt." To be ſhort, Tirrel voluntarily accepted the commiſſion, received warrant to authorize Brakenbury to deliver to him the keys of the Tower for one night; and having ſelected two other villains called Miles Forreſt and John Dighton, the two latter ſmothered the innocent princes in their beds, and then called Tirrel to be witneſs of the execution.

It is difficult to crowd more improbabilities and lies together than are comprehended in this ſhort narrative. Who can believe, if Richard meditated the murder, that he took no care to ſift Brakenbury before he left London? Who can believe that he would truſt ſo atrocious a commiſſion to a letter? And who can imagine, that on * Brakenbury's non-compliance Richard would have ordered him to cede the government of the Tower to Tirrel for one night only, the purpoſe of which had been ſo plainly pointed out by the preceding meſſage? And had ſuch weak ſteps been taken, could the murder itſelf have remained a problem? And yet ſir Thomas More himſelf is forced to confeſs at the outſet of this very narration, "that the deaths and final fortunes of the two young princes have nevertheleſſe ſo far come in queſtion,

* It appears from the Fœdera that Brakenbury was appointed conſtable of the Tower July 7th; that he ſurrendered his patent March 9th of the following year, and had one more ample granted to him. If it is ſuppoſed that Richard renewed this patent to ſir Robert Brakenbury, to prevent his diſcloſing what he knew of a murder in which he had refuſed to be concerned, I then aſk if it is probable that a man too virtuous or too cautious to embark in an aſſaſſination, and of whom the ſuppoſed tyrant ſtood in awe, would have laid down his life in that uſurper's cauſe, as ſir Robert did, being killed on Richard's ſide at Boſworth, when many other of his adherents betrayed him?

that ſome remained long in doubt, whether they were *in his days* deſtroyed* or no." Very memorable words, and ſufficient to balance More's own teſtimony with the moſt ſanguine believers. He adds, "Theſe doubts not only aroſe from the uncertainty men were in, whether Perkin Warbeck was the true duke of York, but for that alſo all things were ſo covertly demeaned, that there was nothing ſo plain and openly proved, but that yet men had it ever inwardly ſuſpect." Sir Thomas goes on to affirm, "that he does not relate the ſtory after every way that he had heard, but after that way that he had heard it by ſuch men and ſuch meanes, as he thought it hard but it ſhould be true." This affirmation reſts on the credibility of certain reporters, we do not know whom, but who we ſhall find were no credible reporters at all. For—to proceed to the confutation—James Tirrel, a man in no ſecret truſt with the king, and kept down by Cateſby and Ratcliffe, is recommended as a proper perſon by a nameleſs page. In the firſt place, Richard was crowned at York (after this tranſaction) September 8th. Edward the fourth had not been dead four months, and Richard in poſſeſſion of any power not above two months, and thoſe very buſtling and active: Tirrel muſt have been impatient indeed, if the page had had time to obſerve his diſcontent at the ſuperior confidence of Ratcliffe and Cateſby. It happens unluckily too, that great part of the time Ratcliffe was abſent, ſir Thomas More himſelf telling us that ſir Richard Ratcliffe had the cuſtody of the priſoners at Pontefract, and preſided at their execution there. But a much more unlucky circumſtance is, that James Tirrel, ſaid to be knighted for this horrid ſervice, was not only a knight before, but a great or very conſiderable officer of the crown; and in that ſituation had walked at Richard's preceding coronation. Should I be told that ſir Thomas More did not mean to confine the ill offices done to Tirrel by Ratcliffe and Cateſby ſolely to the time of Richard's protectorate and regal power, but, being all three attached to him when duke of Glouceſter, the other two might have leſſened Tirrel's credit with the duke even in the preceding reign; then I anſwer, that Richard's appointing him maſter of the horſe on his acceſſion had removed thoſe diſguſts, and left the

* This is confirmed by lord Bacon: "Neither wanted there even at that time ſecret rumours and whiſperings (which afterwards gathered ſtrength, and turned to great trouble) that the two young ſons of king Edward the fourth, or one of them (which were ſaid to be deſtroyed in the Tower), were not indeed murthered, but conveyed ſecretly away, and were yet living." *Reign of Henry the ſeventh*, p. 4. Again, p. 19, "And all this time it was ſtill whiſpered every where that at leaſt one of the children of Edward the fourth was living."

page

page no room to repreſent him as ready through ambition and deſpondency to lend his miniſtry to aſſaſſination. Nor indeed was the maſter of the horſe likely to be ſent to ſuperſede the conſtable of the Tower for one night only. That very act was ſufficient to point out what Richard deſired to, and did, it ſeems, tranſact ſo covertly.

That ſir James Tirrel was and did walk as maſter of the horſe at Richard's coronation cannot be conteſted. A moſt curious, invaluable, and authentic monument has lately been diſcovered, the coronation-roll of Richard the third. Two ſeveral deliveries of parcels of ſtuff are there expreſsly entered, as made to "ſir James Tirrel, knyght, maiſter of the hors of our ſayd ſoverayn lorde the kynge." What now becomes of ſir Thomas More's informers, and of their narrative, which he thought hard but muſt be true?

I will go a ſtep farther, and conſider the evidence of this murder, as produced by Henry the ſeventh ſome years afterwards, when, inſtead of lamenting it, it was neceſſary for his majeſty to hope it had been true; at leaſt to hope the people would think ſo. On the appearance of Perkin Warbeck, who gave himſelf out for the ſecond of the brothers, who was believed ſo by moſt people, and at leaſt feared by the king to be ſo, he beſtirred himſelf to prove that both the princes had been murdered by his predeceſſor. There had been but three actors, beſide Richard who had commanded the execution, and was dead. Theſe were ſir James Tirrel, Dighton, and Forreſt; and theſe were all the perſons whoſe depoſitions Henry pretended to produce; at leaſt two of them, for Forreſt it ſeems had rotted piece-meal away; a kind of death unknown at preſent to the college. But there were ſome others, of whom no notice was taken; as the nameleſs page, Greene, one black Will or Will Slaughter who guarded the princes, the friar who buried them, and ſir Robert Brakenbury, who could not be quite ignorant of what had happened: the latter was killed at Boſworth, and the friar was dead too. But why was no enquiry made after Greene and the page? Still this ſilence was not ſo impudent as the pretended confeſſion of Dighton and ſir James Tirrel. The former certainly did avow the fact, and was ſuffered to go unpuniſhed wherever he pleaſed—undoubtedly that he might ſpread the tale. And obſerve theſe remarkable words of lord Bacon: "John Dighton, who it ſeemeth *ſpake beſt for the king*, was forewith ſet at liberty." In truth, every ſtep of this pretended diſcovery, as it ſtands in lord Bacon, warns us to give no heed

heed to it. Dighton and Tirrel agreed both in a tale, *as the king gave out.* Their confeſſion therefore was not publicly made: and as ſir James Tirrel too was ſuffered to live *, but was ſhut up in the Tower, and put to death afterwards for we know not what treaſon; what can we believe but that Dighton was ſome low mercenary wretch hired to aſſume the guilt of a crime he had not committed, and that ſir James Tirrel never did, never would confeſs what he had not done; and was therefore put out of the way on a fictitious imputation? It muſt be obſerved too, that no enquiry was made into the murder on the acceſſion of Henry the ſeventh, the natural time for it, when the paſſions of men were heated, and when the duke of Norfolk, lord Lovel, Cateſby, Ratcliffe, and the real abettors or accomplices of Richard were attainted and executed. No mention of ſuch a murder was † made in the very act of parliament that attainted Richard himſelf, and which would have been the moſt heinous aggravation of his crimes. And no proſecution of the ſuppoſed aſſaſſins was even thought of till eleven years afterwards, on the appearance of Perkin Warbeck. Tirrel is not named in the act of attainder to which I have had recourſe; and ſuch omiſſions cannot but induce us to ſurmiſe that Henry had never been certain of the deaths of the princes, nor ever intereſted himſelf to prove that both were dead, till he had great reaſon to believe that one of them was alive. Let me add, that if the confeſſions of Dighton and Tirrel were true, ſir Thomas More had no occaſion to recur to the information of his unknown credible informers. If thoſe confeſſions were not true, his informers were not creditable.

Having thus diſproved the *account* of the murder, let us now examine whether we can be ſure that the murder was committed.

Of all men it was moſt incumbent on cardinal Bourchier, archbiſhop of Canterbury, to aſcertain the fact. To him had the queen entruſted her

* It appears by Hall, that ſir James Tirrel had even enjoyed the favour of Henry; for Tirrel is named as captain of Guiſnes in a liſt of valiant officers that were ſent by Henry, in his fifth year, on an expedition into Flanders. Does this look as if Tirrel was ſo much as ſuſpected of the murder? And who can believe his pretended confeſſion afterwards? Sir James was not executed till Henry's ſeventeenth year, on ſuſpicion of treaſon, which ſuſpicion aroſe on the flight of the earl of Suffolk. *Vide Hall's Chronicle, fol.* 18 & 55.

† There is a heap of general accuſations alleged to have been committed by Richard *againſt Henry*, in particular of his having *ſhed infant's blood.* Was this ſufficient ſpecification of the murder of a king? Is it not rather a baſe way of inſinuating a ſlander, of which no proof could be given? Was not it conſonant to all Henry's policy of involving every thing in obſcure and general terms?

younger ſon, and the prelate had pledged himſelf for his ſecurity—unleſs every ſtep of this hiſtory is involved in falſehood. Yet what was the behaviour of the archbiſhop? He appears not to have made the leaſt enquiry into the reports of the murder of both children; nay, not even after Richard's death: on the contrary, Bourchier was the very man who placed the crown on the head of the latter *; and yet not one hiſtorian cenſures this conduct. Threats and fear could not have dictated this ſhameleſs negligence. Every body knows what was the authority of prieſts in that age; an archbiſhop was ſacred, a cardinal inviolable. As Bourchier ſurvived Richard, was it not incumbent on him to ſhow that the duke of York had been aſſaſſinated in ſpite of all his endeavours to ſave him? What can be argued from this inactivity of Bourchier, but that he did not believe the children were murdered †?

Richard's conduct in a parallel caſe is a ſtrong preſumption that this barbarity was falſely laid to his charge. Edward earl of Warwick, his nephew, and ſon of the duke of Clarence, was in his power too, and no indifferent rival, if king Edward's children were baſtards. Clarence had been attainted; but ſo had almoſt every prince who had aſpired to the crown after Richard the ſecond. Richard duke of York, the father of Edward the fourth and Richard the third, was ſon of Richard earl of Cambridge, beheaded for treaſon; yet that duke of York held his father's attainder no bar to his ſucceſſion. Yet how did Richard the third treat his nephew and competitor, the young Warwick? John Rous, a zealous Lancaſtrian and contemporary, ſhall inform

* As cardinal Bourchier ſet the crown on Richard's head at Weſtminſter, ſo did archbiſhop Rotheram at York. Theſe prelates either did not believe Richard had murdered his nephews, or were ſhamefully complaiſant themſelves. Yet their characters ſtand unimpeached in hiſtory. Could Richard be guilty, and the archbiſhops be blameleſs? Could both be ignorant what was become of the young princes, when both had negotiated with the queen dowager? As neither is accuſed of being the creature of Richard, it is probable that neither of them believed he had taken off his nephews. In the Fœdera there is a pardon paſſed to the archbiſhop, which at firſt made me ſuſpect that he had taken ſome part in behalf of the royal children, as he is pardoned for all murders, treaſons, concealments, miſpriſions, riots, routs, &c. but this pardon is not only dated Dec. 13, ſome months after he had crowned Richard; but, on looking farther, I find ſuch pardons frequently granted to the moſt eminent of the clergy. In the next reign Walter, archbiſhop of Dublin, is pardoned all murders, rapes, treaſons, felonies, miſpriſions, riots, routs, extortions, &c.

† Lord Bacon tells us, "that on Simon's and Jude's even, the king (Henry the ſeventh) dined with Thomas Bourchier, archbiſhop of Canterburie, and cardinal: and from Lambeth went by land over the bridge to the Tower." Has not this the appearance of ſome curioſity in the king on the ſubject of the princes, of whoſe fate he was uncertain?

us; and will at the ſame time tell us an important anecdote, maliciouſly ſuppreſſed or ignorantly omitted by all our hiſtorians. Richard actually proclaimed him heir to the crown after the death of his own ſon, and ordered him to be ſerved next to himſelf and the queen, though he afterwards ſet him aſide, and confined him to the caſtle of Sheriff-Hutton *. The very day after the battle of Boſworth, the uſurper Richmond was ſo far from being led aſide from attention to his intereſt by the glare of his new-acquired crown, that he ſent for the earl of Warwick from Sheriff-Hutton and committed him to the Tower, from whence he never ſtirred more, falling a ſacrifice to the inhuman jealouſy of Henry, as his ſiſter, the venerable counteſs of Saliſbury, did afterwards to that of Henry the eighth. Richard, on the contrary, was very affectionate to his family: inſtances appear in his treatment of the earls of Warwick and Lincoln. The lady Anne Poole, ſiſter of the latter, Richard had agreed to marry to the prince of Scotland.

The more generous behaviour of Richard to the ſame young prince (Warwick) ought to be applied to the caſe of Edward the fifth, if no proof exiſts of the murder. But what ſuſpicious words are thoſe of ſir Thomas More, quoted above, and unobſerved by all our hiſtorians: "*Some remained long in doubt*, ſays he, *whether they* (the children) *were in his* (Richard's) *days deſtroyed or no.*" If they were not deſtroyed *in his days*, in *whoſe* days were they murdered? Who will tell me that Henry the ſeventh did not find, the eldeſt at leaſt, priſoner in the Tower? And if he did, what was there in Henry's nature or character to prevent our ſurmiſes going farther?

And here let me lament that two of the greateſt men in our annals have proſtituted their admirable pens, the one to blacken a great prince, the other to varniſh a pitiful tyrant. I mean the two † chancellors, ſir Thomas More

* P. 218. Rous is the more to be credited for this fact, as he ſaw the earl of Warwick in company with Richard at Warwick the year before on the progreſs to York; which ſhows that the king treated his nephew with kindneſs, and did not confine him till, the plots of his enemies thickening, Richard found it neceſſary to ſecure ſuch as had any pretenſions to the crown. This will account for his preferring the earl of Lincoln, who, being his ſiſter's ſon, could have no prior claim before himſelf.

† It is unfortunate, that another great chancellor ſhould have written a hiſtory with the ſame propenſity to miſrepreſentation, I mean lord Clarendon. It is hoped no more chancellors will write our ſtory, till they can diveſt themſelves of that habit of their profeſſion, apologizing for a bad cauſe.

and lord Bacon. The moſt ſenſeleſs ſtories of the mob are converted to hiſtory by the former; the latter is ſtill more culpable: he has held up to the admiration of poſterity, and, what is worſe, to the imitation of ſucceeding princes, a man whoſe neareſt approach to wiſdom was mean cunning; and raiſed into a legiſlator, a ſanguinary, ſordid, and trembling uſurper. Henry was a tyrannic huſband, and ungrateful maſter; he cheated as well as oppreſſed his ſubjects *, bartered the honour of the nation for foreign gold, and cut off every branch of the royal family, to enſure poſſeſſion to his no title. Had he had any title, he could claim it but from his mother, and her he ſet aſide. But of all titles he preferred that of conqueſt, which, if allowable in a foreign prince, can never be valid in a native, but ought to make him the execration of his countrymen.

There is nothing ſtrained in the ſuppoſition of Richard's ſparing his nephew. At leaſt it is certain *now*, that though he diſpoſſeſſed, he undoubtedly treated him at firſt with indulgence, attention, and reſpect: and though the proof I am going to give muſt have mortified the friends of the dethroned young prince, yet it ſhowed great averſion to cruelty, and was an indication that Richard rather aſſumed the crown for a ſeaſon, than as meaning to detain it always from his brother's poſterity. It is well known, that in the Saxon times nothing was more common in caſes of minority than for the uncle to be preferred to the nephew; and though baſtardizing his brother's children was, on this ſuppoſition, double dealing; yet I have no doubt but Richard went ſo far as to inſinuate an intention of reſtoring the crown when young Edward ſhould be of full age. I have three ſtrong proofs of this hypotheſis. In the firſt place, ſir Thomas More reports that the duke of Buckingham in his converſations with Morton, after his defection from Richard, told the biſhop, that the protector's firſt propoſal had been to take the crown till Edward his nephew ſhould attain the age of twenty-four years. Morton was certainly competent evidence of theſe diſcourſes, and therefore a credible one; and the idea is confirmed by the two other proofs I alluded to; the ſecond of which was, that Richard's ſon did *not* walk at his father's coronation. Sir Thomas More indeed ſays that Richard created him prince of Wales on aſſuming the crown: but this is one of ſir Thomas's miſrepreſenta-

* "He had no purpoſe to go through with any warre upon France; but the truth was, that hee did but traffique with that warre to make his returne in money." *Lord Bacon's Reign of Henry the ſeventh*, p. 99.

tions, and is contradicted by fact; for Richard did not create his ſon prince of Wales till he arrived at York: a circumſtance that might lead the people to believe, that in the interval of the two coronations, the latter of which was celebrated at York September 8th, the princes were murdered.

But though Richard's ſon did not walk at his father's coronation, Edward the fifth probably did: and this is my third proof. I conceive all the aſtoniſhment of my readers at this aſſertion, and yet it is founded on ſtrongly preſumptive evidence. In the * coronation-roll itſelf is this amazing entry: "To lord Edward, ſon of late king Edward the fourth, for his apparel and array, that is to ſay, a ſhort gowne made of two yards and three quarters of crymſy clothe of gold, lyned with two yards ¾ of blac velvet, a long gowne made of vi yards D of crymſyn cloth of gold lynned with ſix yards of green damaſk, a ſhorte gowne made of two yards ¾ of purpell velvett lyned with two yards ¾ of green damaſk, a doublett and a ſtomacher made of two yards of blac ſatyn, &c." beſides two foot cloths, a bonet of purple velvet, nine horſe harneſs, and nine ſaddle houſes (houſings) of blue velvet, gilt ſpurs, with many other rich articles, and magnificent apparel for his henchmen or pages.

Let nobody tell me that theſe robes, this magnificence, theſe trappings for a cavalcade, were for the uſe of a priſoner. Marvellous as the fact is, there can be no doubt but the depoſed young king walked, or it was intended ſhould walk, at his uncle's coronation. This precious monument, a terrible reproach to ſir Thomas More and his copyiſts, who have been ſilent on ſo public an event, exiſts in the great wardrobe, and is in the higheſt preſervation; it is written on vellum, and is bound with the coronation-rolls of Henry the ſeventh and eighth. Theſe are written on paper, and are in worſe condition; but that of king Richard is uncommonly fair, accurate, and ample. It is the account of Peter Courteys keeper of the great wardrobe, and dates from the day of king Edward the fourth his death, to the feaſt of the purification in the February of the following year. Peter Courteys ſpecifies what ſtuff he found in the wardrobe, what contracts he made for the

* This ſingular curioſity was firſt mentioned to me by the lord biſhop of Carliſle. Mr. Aſtle lent me an extract of it, with other uſeful aſſiſtances; and Mr. Chamberlain of the great wardrobe obliged me with the peruſal of the original; favours which I take this opportunity of gratefully acknowledging.

enſuing coronation, and the deliveries in conſequence. The whole is couched in the moſt minute and regular manner, and is preferable to a thouſand vague and intereſted hiſtories. The concourſe of nobility at that ceremony was extraordinarily great: there were preſent no fewer than three ducheſſes of Norfolk. Has this the air of a forced and precipitate election? Or does it not indicate a voluntary concurrence of the nobility? No mention being made in the roll of the young duke of York, no robes being ordered for him, it looks extremely as if he was not in Richard's cuſtody; and ſtrengthens the probability that will appear hereafter, of his having been conveyed away.

There is another article, rather curious than deciſive of any point of hiſtory. One entry is thus: "To the lady Brygitt, oon of the daughters of K. Edward IIIIth, being ſeeke (ſick) in the ſaid wardrobe, for to have for her uſe two long pillows of fuſtian ſtuffed with downe, and two pilow beres of Holland cloth." The only conjecture that can be formed from this paſſage is, that the lady Bridget, being lodged in the great wardrobe, was not then in ſanctuary.

Can it be doubted now but that Richard meant to have it thought that his aſſumption of the crown was only temporary? But when he proceeded to baſtardize his nephew by act of parliament, then it became neceſſary to ſet him entirely aſide: ſtronger proofs of the baſtardy might have come out: and it is reaſonable to infer this; for on the death of his own ſon, when Richard had no longer any reaſon of family to bar his brother Edward's children, inſtead of again calling them to the ſucceſſion, as he at firſt projected or gave out he would, he ſettled the crown on the iſſue of his ſiſter, Suffolk, declaring her eldeſt ſon the earl of Lincoln his ſucceſſor. That young prince was ſlain in the battle of Stoke againſt Henry the ſeventh, and his younger brother the earl of Suffolk, who had fled to Flanders, was extorted from the archduke Philip, who by contrary winds had been driven into England. Henry took a ſolemn oath not to put him to death; but copying David rather than Solomon, he on his death-bed recommended it to his ſon Henry the eighth to execute Suffolk; and Henry the eighth was too pious not to obey ſo ſcriptural an injunction.

Strange as the fact was of Edward the fifth walking at his ſucceſſor's coronation, I have found an event exactly parallel which happened ſome years before.

before. It is well known that the famous Joan of Naples was dethroned and murdered by the man ſhe had choſen for her heir, Charles Durazzo. Ingratitude and cruelty were the characteriſtics of that wretch. He had been brought up and formed by his uncle Louis king of Hungary, who left only two daughters. Mary the eldeſt ſucceeded and was declared *king*; for that warlike nation, who regarded the ſex of a word more than of a perſon, would not ſuffer themſelves to be governed by the term *queen*. Durazzo quitted Naples in purſuit of new ingratitude; dethroned *king Mary*, and obliged her to walk at his coronation; an inſult ſhe and her mother ſoon revenged by having him aſſaſſinated.

I do not doubt but the wickedneſs of Durazzo will be thought a proper parallel to Richard's. But parallels prove nothing: and a man muſt be a very poor reaſoner who thinks he has an advantage over me, becauſe I dare produce a circumſtance that reſembles my ſubject in the caſe to which it is applied, and leaves my argument juſt as ſtrong as it was before in every other point.

They who the moſt firmly believe the murder of the two princes, and from what I have ſaid it is plain that they believe it more ſtrongly than the age did in which it was pretended to be committed, urge the diſappearance * of the princes as a proof of the murder; but that argument vaniſhes entirely, at leaſt with regard to one of them, if Perkin Warbeck was the true duke of York, as I ſhall ſhow that it is greatly probable he was.

With regard to the elder, his diſappearance is no kind of proof that he was murdered: he might die in the Tower. The queen pleaded to the archbiſhop of York that both princes were weak and unhealthy. I have inſinuated that it is not impoſſible but Henry the ſeventh might find him alive in the Tower. I mention that as a bare poſſibility—but we may be very ſure that, if he did find Edward alive there, he would not have notified his exiſtence, to acquit Richard and hazard his own crown. The circumſtances of the murder were evidently falſe, and invented by Henry to diſcredit Per-

* Polydore Virgil ſays, "In vulgus fama valuit filios Edwardi regis aliquo terrarum partem migraſſe, atque ita ſuperſtites eſſe." And the prior of Croyland, not his continuator, whom I ſhall quote in the next note but one, and who was ſtill better informed, "Vulgatum eſt regis Edwardi pueros conceſſiſſe in fata, ſed quo genere interitus ignoratur."

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kin: and the time of the murder is abſolutely a fiction; for it appears by the roll of parliament, which baſtardized Edward the fifth, that he was then * alive, which was ſeven months after the time aſſigned by More for his murder. If Richard ſpared him ſeven months, what could ſuggeſt a reaſon for his murder afterwards? To take him off then was ſtrengthening the plan of the earl of Richmond, who aimed at the crown by marrying Elizabeth, eldeſt daughter of Edward the fourth. As the houſe of York never roſe again, as the reverſe of Richard's fortune deprived him of any friend, and as no contemporaries but Fabian and the author of the Chronicle have written a word on that period, and they too ſlightly to inform us, it is impoſſible to know whether Richard ever took any ſteps to refute the calumny. But we know that Fabian only mentions the deaths of the *princes* as *reports*; which is proof that Richard never declared their deaths, or the death of either, as he would probably have done if he had removed them for his own ſecurity. The confeſſions of ſir Thomas More and lord Bacon, that many doubted of the murder, amount to a violent preſumption that they were not murdered; and to

* Buck aſſerts this from the parliament-roll. The annotator in Kennett's collection ſays, "This author would have done much towards the credit he drives at in his hiſtory, to have ſpecified the place of the roll and the words thereof, whence ſuch arguments might be gathered; for, adds he, all hiſtories relate the murders to be committed before this time." I have ſhown that *all hiſtories* are reduced to one hiſtory, ſir Thomas More's; for the reſt copy him verbatim; and I have ſhown that his account is falſe and improbable. As the roll itſelf is now printed in the Parliamentary Hiſtory, vol. 2, I will point out the words that imply Edward the fifth being alive when the act was paſſed. "Alſo it appeareth that *all* the iſſue of the ſaid king Edward *be* baſtards and unable to inherit or claim any thing by inheritance, by the law and cuſtom of England." Had Edward the fifth been dead, would not the act indubitably have run thus, *were and be baſtards*. No, ſays the act, *all* the iſſue *are* baſtards. Who were rendered uncapable to inherit but Edward the fifth, his brother and ſiſters? Would not the act have ſpecified the daughters of Edward the fourth, if the ſons had been dead? It was to baſtardize the brothers, that the act was calculated and paſſed; and as the words *all the iſſue* comprehend males and females, it is clear that both were intended to be baſtardized. I muſt however impartially obſerve, that Philip de Comines ſays, Richard having murdered his nephews, degraded their two ſiſters in full parliament. I will not dwell on his miſtake of mentioning *two* ſiſters inſtead of five; but it muſt be remarked, that neither brothers nor ſiſters being ſpecified in the act, but under the general term of king Edward's iſſue, it would naturally ſtrike thoſe who were uncertain what was become of the ſons, that this act was levelled againſt the daughters. And as Comines did not write till ſome years after the event, he could not well help falling into that miſtake. For my own part, I know not how to believe that Richard would have paſſed that act, if he had murdered the two princes. It was recalling a ſhocking crime, and to little purpoſe; for, as no woman had at that time ever ſat on the Engliſh throne in her own right, Richard had little reaſon to apprehend the claim of his nieces.

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a proof that their deaths were never declared. No man has ever doubted that Edward the ſecond, Richard the ſecond, and Henry the ſixth periſhed at the times that were given out. Nor Henry the fourth nor Edward the fourth thought it would much help their titles to leave it doubtful whether their competitors exiſted or not. Obſerve too, that the Chronicle of Croyland, after relating Richard's ſecond coronation at York, ſays it was adviſed by ſome in the ſanctuary at Weſtminſter to convey abroad ſome of king Edward's daughters, "ut ſi quid dictis maſculis humanitus in Turri contingerat, nihilominus per ſalvandas perſonas filiarum, regnum aliquando ad veros rediret hæredes." He ſays not a word of the princes being murdered, only urges the fear of their friends that it might happen. This was a living witneſs, very bitter againſt Richard, who ſtill never accuſes him of deſtroying his nephews, and who ſpeaks of them as living, after the time in which ſir Thomas More, who was not then five years old, declares they were dead. Thus the Parliament-roll and the Chronicle agree, and both contradict More. "Interim & dum hæc agerentur (the coronation at York) remanſerunt duo predicti Edwardi regis filii ſub certâ deputatâ cuſtodiâ infra Turrim Londoniarum." Theſe are the expreſs words of the Chronicle, p. 567.

As Richard gained the crown by the illegitimacy of his nephews, his cauſing them to be murdered, would not only have ſhown that he did not truſt to that plea, but would have transferred their claim to their ſiſters. And I muſt not be told that his intended marriage with his niece is an anſwer to my argument; for were that imputation true, which is very problematic, it had nothing to do with the murder of her brothers. And here the compariſon and irrefragability of dates puts this matter out of all doubt. It was not till the very cloſe of his reign that Richard is even ſuppoſed to have thought of marrying his niece. The deaths of his nephews are dated in July or Auguſt 1483. His own ſon did not die till April 1484, nor his queen till March 1485. He certainly therefore did not mean to ſtrengthen his title by marrying his niece to the diſinheriſon of his own ſon; and having on the loſs of that ſon, declared his nephew the earl of Lincoln his ſucceſſor, it is plain that he ſtill truſted to the illegitimacy of his brother's children: and in no caſe poſſibly to be put, can it be thought that he wiſhed to give ſtrength to the claim of the princeſs Elizabeth.

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Let us now examine the accuſation of his intending to marry that niece; one of the conſequences of which intention is a vague ſuſpicion of poiſoning his wife. Buck ſays that the queen was in a languiſhing condition, and that the phyſicians declared ſhe could not hold out till April; and he affirms having ſeen, in the earl of Arundel's library, a letter written in paſſionate ſtrains of love for her uncle by Elizabeth to the duke of Norfolk, in which ſhe expreſſed doubts that the month of April would never arrive. What is there in this account that looks like poiſon? Does it not prove that Richard would *not* haſten the death of his queen? The tales of poiſoning for a certain time are now exploded; nor is it in nature to believe that the princeſs could be impatient to marry him, if ſhe knew or thought he had murdered her brothers. Hiſtorians tell us that the queen took much to heart the death of her ſon, and never got over it. Had Richard been eager to wed his niece, and had his character been as impetuouſly wicked as it is repreſented, he would not have let the forward princeſs wait for the ſlow decay of her rival; nor did he think of it till nine months after the death of his ſon; which ſhows it was only to prevent Richmond's marrying her. His declaring his nephew his ſucceſſor, implies at the ſame time no thought of his getting rid of his queen, though he did not expect more iſſue from her: and little as Buck's authority is regarded, a cotemporary writer confirms the probability of this ſtory. The Chronicle of Croyland ſays, that at* the Chriſtmas feſtival, men were ſcandalized at ſeeing the queen and the lady Elizabeth dreſſed in robes ſimilar and equally royal. I ſhould ſuppoſe that Richard, learning the projected marriage of Elizabeth and the earl of Richmond, amuſed the young princeſs with the hopes of making her his queen; and that Richard feared that alliance,

* "Per hæc feſta natalia choreis aut tripudiis, variiſque mutatoriis veſtium Annæ reginæ atque dominæ Elizabeth, primogenitæ defuncti regis, eiſdem colore & forma diſtributis nimis intentum eſt: dictumque a multis eſt, ipſum regem aut expectatâ morte reginæ aut per divortium, matrimonio cum dictâ Elizabeth contrahendo mentem omnibus modis applicare." p. 572. If Richard projected this match at Chriſtmas, he was not likely to let theſe intentions be perceived ſo early, nor to wait till March, if he did not know that the queen was incurably ill. The Chronicle ſays, ſhe died of a languiſhing diſtemper. Did that look like poiſon? It is ſcarce neceſſary to ſay that a diſpenſation from the pope was in that age held ſo clear a ſolution of all obſtacles to the marriage of near relations, and was ſo eaſily to be obtained or purchaſed by a great prince, that Richard would not have been thought by his contemporaries to have incurred any guilt, even if he had propoſed to wed his niece, which however is far from being clear to have been his intention.

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is plain from his ſending her to the caſtle of Sheriff-Hutton on the landing of Richmond.

The behaviour of the queen-dowager muſt alſo be noticed. She was ſtripped by her ſon-in-law Henry of all her poſſeſſions, and confined to a monaſtery, for delivering up her daughters to Richard. Hiſtorians too are laviſh in their cenſures on her for conſenting to beſtow her daughter on the murderer of her ſons and brother. But if the murder of her ſons is, as we have ſeen, moſt uncertain, this ſolemn charge falls to the ground: and for the deaths of her brother and lord Richard Grey, one of her elder ſons, it has already appeared that ſhe imputed them to Haſtings. It is much more likely that Richard convinced her he had not murdered her ſons, than that ſhe delivered up her daughters to him believing it. The rigour exerciſed on her by Henry the ſeventh on her countenancing Lambert Simnel, evidently ſet up to try the temper of the nation in favour of ſome prince of the houſe of York, is a violent preſumption that the queen-dowager believed her ſecond ſon living: and notwithſtanding all the endeavours of Henry to diſcredit Perkin Warbeck, it will remain highly probable, that many more who ought to know the truth believed ſo likewiſe; and that fact I ſhall examine next.

It was in the ſecond year of Henry the ſeventh that Lambert Simnel appeared. This youth firſt perſonated Richard duke of York, then Edward Earl of Warwick; and was undoubtedly an impoſtor. Lord Bacon owns that it was whiſpered every-where, that *at leaſt one* of the children of Edward the fourth was living. Such whiſpers prove two things: one, that the murder was very uncertain; the ſecond, that it would have been very dangerous to diſprove the murder, Henry being at leaſt as much intereſted as Richard had been to have the children dead. Richard had ſet them aſide as baſtards, and thence had a title to the crown; but Henry was himſelf the iſſue of a baſtard line, and had no title at all. Faction had ſet him on the throne, and his match with the ſuppoſed heireſs of York induced the nation to wink at the defect in his own blood. The children of Clarence and of the ducheſs of Suffolk were living; ſo was the young duke of Buckingham, legitimately ſprung from the youngeſt ſon of Edward the third; whereas Henry came of the ſpurious ſtock of John of Gaunt. Lambert Simnel appeared before Henry had had time to diſguſt the nation, as he did afterwards by

his tyranny, cruelty, and exactions.—But what was moſt remarkable, the queen dowager tampered in this plot. Is it to be believed, that mere turbulence and a reſtleſs ſpirit could in a year's time influence that woman to throw the nation again into a civil war, and attempt to dethrone her own daughter? And in favour of whom? Of the iſſue of Clarence, whom ſhe had contributed to have put to death, or in favour of an impoſtor? There is not common ſenſe in the ſuppoſition. No; ſhe certainly knew or believed that Richard, her ſecond ſon, had eſcaped and was living, and was glad to overturn the uſurper without riſking her child. The plot failed, and the queen dowager was ſhut up, where ſhe remained till her death, "in priſon, * poverty, and ſolitude." The king trumped up a ſilly accuſation of her having delivered her daughters out of ſanctuary to king Richard; "which proceeding," ſays the noble hiſtorian, "being even at that time taxed for rigorous and undue, makes it very probable there was ſome greater matter againſt her, which the king, upon reaſon of policie, and to avoid envy, would not publiſh." How truth ſometimes eſcapes from the moſt courtly pens! What interpretation can be put on theſe words, but that the king found the queen dowager was privy to the eſcape at leaſt or the exiſtence of her ſecond ſon, and ſecured her, leſt ſhe ſhould bear teſtimony to the truth, and foment inſurrections in his favour? Lord Bacon adds, "It is likewiſe no ſmall argument that *there was ſome ſecret in it*, for that the prieſt Simon himſelf (who ſet Lambert to work), after he was taken, was never brought to execution; no, not ſo much as to publicke triall, but was only ſhut up cloſe in a dungeon. Adde to this, that after the earl of Lincoln (a principal perſon of the houſe of York) was ſlaine in Stokefield, the king opened himſelf to ſome of his councell, that he was ſorie for the earl's death, becauſe by him (he ſaid) he might have known the bottom of his danger."

The earl of Lincoln had been declared heir to the crown by Richard, and therefore certainly did not mean to advance Simnel, an impoſtor, to it. It will be inſinuated, and lord Bacon attributes that motive to him, that the earl of Lincoln hoped to open a way to the crown for himſelf. It might be ſo: ſtill that will not account for Henry's wiſh, that the earl had been ſaved. On the contrary, one dangerous competitor was removed by his death; and therefore, when Henry wanted to have learned *the bottom of his danger*, it is

* Lord Bacon.

plain he referred to Richard duke of York, of whoſe fate he was ſtill in doubt *. He certainly was: why elſe was it thought dangerous to viſit or ſee the queen dowager after her impriſonment, as lord Bacon owns it was? "For that act," continues he, "the king ſuſtained great obloquie; which nevertheleſs (beſides the reaſon of ſtate) was ſomewhat ſweetened to him by a great confiſcation." Excellent prince! This is the man in whoſe favour Richard the third is repreſented as a monſter!

"For Lambert, the king would not take his life," continues Henry's biographer, "both out of magnanimitie" (a moſt proper picture of ſo mean a mind!) "and likewiſe out of wiſdom, thinking that if he ſuffered death he would be forgotten too ſoon; but being kept alive, he would be a continual ſpectacle, and a kind of remedy againſt the *like inchantments of people* in time to come." What! do lawful princes live in dread of a poſſibility of phantoms †? Oh! no: but Henry knew what he had to fear; and he hoped, by keeping up the memory of Simnel's impoſture, to diſcredit the true duke of York, as another puppet, whenever he ſhould really appear.

That appearance did not happen till ſome years afterwards, and in Henry's eleventh year. Lord Bacon has taken infinite pains to prove a ſecond impoſture; and yet owns, "that the king's manner of ſhewing things by pieces and by darke lights, hath ſo muffled it, that it hath left it almoſt a myſterie to this day." What has he left a myſtery? And what did he try to muffle? Not the impoſture, but the truth. Had ſo politic a man any intereſt to leave the matter doubtful? Did he try to leave it ſo? On the contrary, his diligence to detect the impoſture was prodigious. Did he publiſh his narrative to obſcure or elucidate the tranſaction? Was it his manner to muffle any point that he could clear up, eſpecially when it behoved him to have it cleared?

* The earl of Lincoln aſſuredly did not mean to blacken his uncle Richard, by whom he had been declared heir to the crown. One ſhould therefore be glad to know what account he gave of the eſcape of the young duke of York. Is it probable that the earl of Lincoln gave out, that the elder had been murdered? It is more reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the earl aſſerted that the child had been conveyed away by means of the queen dowager or ſome other friend; and before I conclude this examination, that I think will appear moſt probably to have been the caſe.

† Henry had ſo great a diſtruſt of his right to the crown, that in his ſecond year he obtained a bull from pope Innocent to qualify the privileges of ſanctuaries, in which was this remarkable clauſe, "That if any took ſanctuarie for caſe of treaſon, the king might appoint him keepers to look to him in ſanctuarie." *Lord Bacon*, p. 39.

When Lambert Simnel firſt perſonated the earl of Warwick, did not Henry exhibit that poor prince on a Sunday throughout all the principal ſtreets of London? Was he not conducted to Paul's croſs, and openly examined by the nobility? "which did in effect marre the pageant in Ireland." Was not Lambert himſelf taken into Henry's ſervice, and kept in his court for the ſame purpoſe? In ſhort, what did Henry ever muffle and diſguiſe but the truth? And why was his whole conduct ſo different in the caſes of Lambert and Perkin, if their caſes were not totally different? No doubt remains on the former: the groſs falſehoods and contradictions in which Henry's account of the latter is involved, make it evident that he himſelf could never detect the impoſture of the latter, if it was one. Dates, which every hiſtorian has neglected, again come to our aid, and cannot be controverted.

Richard duke of York was born in 1474. Perkin Warbeck was not heard of before 1495, when duke Richard would have been twenty-one. Margaret of York, ducheſs dowager of Burgundy, and ſiſter of Edward the fourth, is ſaid by lord Bacon to have been the Juno who perſecuted the pious Æneas, Henry, and ſet up this phantom againſt him. She it was, ſay the hiſtorians, and ſays lord Bacon, p. 115, "who informed Perkin of all the circumſtances and particulars that concerned the perſon of Richard duke of York, which he was to act, deſcribing unto him the perſonages, lineaments, and features of the king and queen, his pretended parents, and of his brothers and ſiſters, and divers others that were neareſt him in his childhood; together with all paſſages, ſome ſecret, ſome common, that were fit for a child's memory, until the death of king Edward. Then ſhe added the particulars of the time from the king's death, until he and his brother were committed to the Tower, as well during the time he was abroad, as while he was in ſanctuary. As for the times while he was in the Tower, and the manner of his brother's death, and his own eſcape, ſhe knew they were things that verie few could controle: and therefore ſhe taught him only to tell a ſmooth and likely tale of thoſe matters, warning him not to vary from it." Indeed! Margaret muſt in truth have been a Juno, a divine power, if ſhe could give all theſe inſtructions to purpoſe. This paſſage is ſo very important, the whole ſtory depends ſo much upon it, that if I can ſhow the utter impoſſibility of its being true, Perkin will remain the true duke of York for any thing we can prove to the contrary; and for Henry, ſir Thomas More, lord

Bacon, and their copyiſts, it will be impoſſible to give any longer credit to their narratives.

I have ſaid that duke Richard was born in 1474. Unfortunately his aunt Margaret was married out of England in 1467, ſeven years before he was born, and never returned thither. Was not ſhe ſingularly capable of deſcribing to Perkin, her nephew whom ſhe had never ſeen? How well informed was ſhe of the times of his childhood, and of all paſſages relating to his brother and ſiſters! Oh, but ſhe had Engliſh refugees about her. She muſt have had many, and thoſe of moſt intimate connection with the court, if ſhe and they together could compoſe a tolerable ſtory for Perkin, that was to take in the moſt minute paſſages of ſo many years *. Who informed Margaret, that ſhe might inform Perkin, of what paſſed in ſanctuary? Ay; and who told her what paſſed in the Tower? Let the warmeſt aſſerter of the impoſture anſwer that queſtion, and I will give up all I have ſaid in this work; yes, all. Forreſt was dead, and the ſuppoſed prieſt; ſir James Tirrel and Dighton were in Henry's hands. Had they trumpeted about the ſtory of their own guilt and infamy, till Henry, *after* Perkin's appearance, found it neceſſary to publiſh it? Sir James Tirrel and Dighton had certainly never gone to the court of Burgundy to make a merit with Margaret of having murdered her nephews. How came ſhe to know accurately and authentically a tale which no mortal elſe knew? Did Perkin or did he not correſpond in his narrative with Tirrel and Dighton? If he did, how was it poſſible for him to know it? If he did not, is it morally credible that Henry would not

* It would have required half the court of Edward the fourth to frame a conſiſtent legend. Let us ſtate this in a manner that muſt ſtrike our apprehenſion. The late princeſs royal was married out of England, before any of the children of the late prince of Wales were born. She lived no farther than the Hague; and yet who thinks that ſhe could have inſtructed a Dutch lad in ſo many paſſages of the courts of her father and brother, that he would not have been detected in an hour's time? Twenty-ſeven years at leaſt had elapſed ſince Margaret had been in the court of England. The marquis of Dorſet, the earl of Richmond himſelf, and moſt of the fugitives had taken refuge in Bretagne, not with Margaret; and yet was ſhe ſo informed of every trifling ſtory, even of thoſe of the nurſery, that ſhe was able to poſe Henry himſelf, and reduce him to invent a tale that had not a ſhadow of probability in it. Why did he not convict Perkin out of his own mouth? Was it ever pretended that Perkin failed in his part? That was the ſureſt and beſt proof of his being an impoſtor. Could not the whole court, the whole kingdom of England, ſo croſs-examine this Flemiſh youth, as to catch him in one lie? No; lord Bacon's Juno had inſpired him with full knowledge of all that had paſſed in the laſt twenty years. If Margaret was Juno, he who ſhall anſwer theſe queſtions ſatisfactorily, "erit mihi magnus Apollo."

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have made thoſe variations public? If Edward the fifth was murdered, and the duke of York ſaved, Perkin could know it but by being the latter. If he did not know it, what was ſo obvious as his detection? We muſt allow Perkin to be the true duke of York, or give up the whole ſtory of Tirrel and Dighton. When Henry had Perkin, Tirrel, and Dighton in his power, he had nothing to do but to confront them, and the impoſture was detected. It would not have been ſufficient that Margaret had enjoined him *to tell a ſmooth and likely tale of thoſe matters.* A man does not tell a likely tale, nor was a *likely* tale enough, of matters of which he is totally ignorant.

Still farther: why was Perkin never confronted with the queen dowager, with Henry's own queen, and with the princeſſes, her ſiſters? Why were they never aſked, Is this your ſon? Is this your brother? Was Henry afraid to truſt to their natural emotions? Yet "he himſelf," ſays lord Bacon, page 186, "ſaw him ſometimes out of a window, or in paſſage." This implies that the queens and princeſſes never did ſee him; and yet they ſurely were the perſons who could beſt detect the counterfeit, if he had been one. Had the young man made a *voluntary*, coherent, and credible confeſſion, no other evidence of his impoſture would be wanted; but failing that, we cannot help aſking, Why the obvious means of detection were not employed? Thoſe means having been omitted, our ſuſpicions remain in full force.

Henry, who thus neglected every means of confounding the impoſtor, took every ſtep he would have done, if convinced that Perkin was the true duke of York. His utmoſt induſtry was exerted in ſifting to the bottom of the plot, in learning who was engaged in the conſpiracy, and in detaching the chief ſupporters. It is ſaid, though not affirmatively, that to procure confidence to his ſpies, he cauſed them to be ſolemnly curſed at Paul's croſs. Certain it is, that by their information he came to the knowledge, not of the impoſture, but what rather tended to prove that Perkin was a genuine Plantagenet: I mean, ſuch a liſt of great men actually in his court and in truſt about his perſon, that no wonder he was ſeriouſly alarmed. Sir Robert Clifford *, who had fled to Margaret, wrote to England, that he was poſitive that the claimant was the very identical duke of York, ſon of Edward the fourth, whom he had ſo often ſeen, and was perfectly acquainted with.

* A gentleman of fame and family, ſays lord Bacon.

This man, Clifford, was bribed back to Henry's ſervice; and what was the conſequence? He accuſed ſir William Stanley, lord chamberlain, the very man who had ſet the crown on Henry's head in Boſworth field, and own brother to the earl of Derby, the then actual huſband of Henry's mother, of being in the conſpiracy! This was indeed eſſential to Henry to know; but what did it proclaim to the nation? What could ſtagger the allegiance of ſuch truſt and ſuch connections, but the firm perſuaſion that Perkin was the true duke of York? A ſpirit of faction and diſguſt has even in later times hurried men into treaſonable combinations; but however ſir William Stanley might be diſſatisfied, as not thinking himſelf adequately rewarded, yet is it credible that he ſhould riſk ſuch favour, ſuch riches, as lord Bacon allows he poſſeſſed, on the wild bottom of a Flemiſh counterfeit? The lord Fitzwalter and other great men ſuffered in the ſame cauſe; and which is remarkable, the firſt was executed at Calais—another preſumption that Henry would not venture to have his evidence made public. And the ſtrongeſt preſumption of all is, that not one of the ſufferers is pretended to have recanted; they all died then in the perſuaſion that they had engaged in a righteous cauſe. When peers, knights of the garter, privy-counſellors, ſuffer death, from conviction of a matter of which they were proper judges, (for which of them but muſt know their late maſter's ſon?) it would be raſh indeed in us to affirm that they laid down their lives for an impoſture, and died with a lie in their mouths.

What can be ſaid againſt king James of Scotland, who beſtowed a lady of his own blood in marriage on Perkin? At war with Henry, James would naturally ſupport his rival, whether genuine or ſuppoſititious. He and Charles the eighth both gave him aid and both gave him up, as the wind of their intereſt ſhifted about. Recent inſtances of ſuch conduct have been ſeen; but what prince has gone ſo far as to ſtake his belief in a doubtful cauſe, by ſacrificing a princeſs of his own blood in confirmation of it?

But it is needleſs to multiply preſumptions. Henry's conduct, and the narrative * he publiſhed, are ſufficient to ſtagger every impartial reader. Lord Bacon confeſſes *the king did himſelf no good* by the publication of that narrative, and that mankind was aſtoniſhed to find no mention in it of the ducheſs

* To what degree arbitrary power dares to triſle with the common ſenſe of mankind has been ſeen in Portugueſe and Ruſſian manifeſtos.

Margaret's

Margaret's machinations. But how could lord Bacon ſtop there? Why did he not conjecture that there was no proof of that tale? What intereſt had Henry to manage a widow of Burgundy? He had applied to the archduke Philip to baniſh Perkin: Philip replied, he had no power over the lands of the ducheſs's dowry. It is therefore moſt credible that the ducheſs had ſupported Perkin, on the perſuaſion he was her nephew; and Henry not being able to prove the reports he had ſpread of her having trained up an impoſtor, choſe to drop all mention of Margaret, becauſe nothing was ſo natural as her ſupporting the heir of her houſe. On the contrary, in Perkin's confeſſion, as it was called, and which, though preſerved by Grafton, was ſuppreſſed by lord Bacon, not only as repugnant to his lordſhip's account, but to common ſenſe, Perkin affirms, that "having ſailed to Liſbon in a ſhip with the lady Brampton, who, lord Bacon ſays, was ſent by Margaret to conduct him thither, and from thence having reſorted to Ireland, it was at Cork that they of the town firſt threaped upon him that he was ſon of the duke of Clarence; and others afterwards, that he was the duke of York." But the contradictions both in lord Bacon's account, and in Henry's narrative, are irreconcileable and inſurmountable: the former ſolves the likeneſs *, which is allowing the likeneſs, of Perkin to Edward the fourth, by ſuppoſing that the king had an intrigue with his mother; of which he gives this ſilly relation: that Perkin Warbeck, whoſe ſurname it ſeems was Peter Oſbeck, was ſon of a Flemiſh converted Jew (of which Hebrew extraction Perkin ſays not a † word in his confeſſion), who with his wife Katherine de Faro came to London on buſineſs; and ſhe producing a ſon, king Edward, in conſideration of the converſion, or intrigue, ſtood godfather to the child and gave him the name of *Peter*. Can one help laughing at being told that a king called *Edward* gave the name of *Peter* to his godſon? But of this transfretation and chriſtening, Perkin in his ſuppoſed confeſſion ſays not a word, nor pretends to have ever ſet foot in England till he landed there in purſuit of the crown: and yet an Engliſh birth and ſome ſtay, though in his very childhood, was a better

* As this ſolution of the likeneſs is not authoriſed by the youth's ſuppoſed narrative, the likeneſs remains uncontrovertible, and conſequently another argument for his being king Edward's ſon.

† On the contrary, Perkin calls his grandfather Diryck Oſbeck; Diryck every body knows is Theodoric, and Theodoric is certainly no Jewiſh appellation. Perkin too mentions ſeveral of his relations and their employments at Tournay, without any hint of a Hebrew connection.

way

way of accounting for the purity of his accent, than either of the prepoſterous tales produced by lord Bacon or by Henry. The former ſays that Perkin, roving up and down between Antwerp and Tournay and other towns, and living much in Engliſh company, had the Engliſh tongue perfect. Henry was ſo afraid of not aſcertaining a good foundation of Perkin's Engliſh accent, that he makes him learn the language twice over *. "Being ſent with a merchant of Turney, called Berlo, to the mart of Antwerp, the ſaid Berlo ſet me, ſays Perkin, to borde in a ſkinner's houſe, that dwelled beſide the houſe of the Engliſh nation. And after this the ſayd Berlo ſet me with a merchant of Middelborough to ſervice for † *to learne the language*, with whom I dwelled from Chriſtmas to Eaſter, and then I went into Portyngale." One does not learn any language very perfectly, and with a good, nay undiſtinguiſhable accent, between Chriſtmas and Eaſter: but here let us pauſe. If this account was true, the other relating to the ducheſs Margaret was falſe; and then how came Perkin by ſo accurate a knowledge of the Engliſh court, that he did not falter, nor could be detected in his tale? If the confeſſion was *not* true, it remains that it was trumped up by Henry, and then Perkin muſt be allowed the true duke of York.

* Graſton's Chronicle, p. 930.

† I take this to mean the Engliſh language, for theſe reaſons; he had juſt before named the Engliſh nation, and the name of his maſter was John Strewe, which ſeems to be an Engliſh appellation: but there is a ſtronger reaſon for believing it means the Engliſh language, which is, that a Flemiſh lad is not ſet to learn his own language; though even this abſurdity is advanced in this ſame pretended confeſſion, Perkin affirming that his mother, after he had dwelled ſome time in Tournay, ſent him to Antwerp to learn Flemiſh. If I am told by a very improbable ſuppoſition, that French was his native language at Tournay, that he learned Flemiſh at Antwerp, and Dutch at Middleburg, I will deſire the objector to caſt his eye on the map, and conſider the ſmall diſtance between Tournay, Middleburg, and Antwerp, and to reflect that the preſent United Provinces were not then divided from the reſt of Flanders; and then to decide whether the dialects ſpoken at Tournay, Antwerp, and Middleburg, were ſo different in that age, that it was neceſſary to be ſet to learn them all ſeparately. If this cannot be anſwered ſatisfactorily, it will remain, that Perkin learned Flemiſh or Engliſh twice over. I am indifferent which, for ſtill there will remain a contradiction in the confeſſion. And if Engliſh is not meant in the paſſage above, it will only produce a greater difficulty, which is, that Perkin at the age of twenty learned to ſpeak Engliſh in Ireland with ſo good an accent, that all England could not diſcover the cheat. I muſt be anſwered too, why lord Bacon rejects the youth's own confeſſion, and ſubſtitutes another in its place, which makes Perkin born in England, though in his pretended confeſſion Perkin affirms the contrary. Lord Bacon too confirms my interpretation of the paſſage in queſtion, by ſaying that Perkin roved up and down between Antwerp and other towns in Flanders, living much in Engliſh company, and having the Engliſh tongue perfect. p. 115.

But

But the groſs contradiction of all follows: "It was in Ireland," ſays Perkin, in this very narrative and confeſſion, "that againſt my will they made me to learne Engliſh, and taught me what I ſhould do and ſay." Amazing! What, forced him to learn Engliſh, after, as he ſays himſelf, in the very ſame page, he had learnt it at Antwerp! What an impudence was there in royal power to dare to obtrude ſuch ſtuff on the world! Yet this confeſſion, as it is called, was the poor young man forced to read at his execution—no doubt in dread of worſe torture. Mr. Hume, though he queſtions it, owns that it was believed by torture to have been drawn from him. What matters how it was obtained, or whether ever obtained? It could not be true: and as Henry could put together no more plauſible account, commiſeration will ſhed a tear over a hapleſs youth ſacrificed to the fury and jealouſy of an uſurper, and in all probability the victim of a tyrant, who has made the world believe that the duke of York, executed by his own orders, had been previouſly murdered by his predeceſſor *.

I have thus, I flatter myſelf, from the diſcovery of new authorities, from the compariſon of dates, from fair conſequences and arguments, and without ſtraining or wreſting probability, proved all I pretended to prove; not an hypotheſis of Richard's univerſal innocence, but this aſſertion with which I ſet out, that we have no reaſons, no authority for believing by far the greater part of the crimes charged on him. I have convicted hiſtorians of partiality, abſurdities, contradictions, and falſehoods; and though I have deſtroyed their credit, I have ventured to eſtabliſh no peremptory concluſion of my own. What did really happen in ſo dark a period it would be raſh to affirm. The coronation and parliament-rolls have aſcertained a few facts, either totally unknown, or miſrepreſented by hiſtorians. Time may bring other monu-

* Mr. Hume, to whoſe doubts all reſpect is due, tells me, he thinks no mention being made of Perkin's title in the Corniſh rebellion under the lord Audeley, is a ſtrong preſumption that the nation was not perſuaded of his being the true duke of York. This argument, which at moſt is negative, ſeems to me to loſe its weight, when it is remembered that this was an inſurrection occaſioned by a poll-tax: that the rage of the people was directed againſt archbiſhop Morton and ſir Reginald Bray, the ſuppoſed authors of the grievance. An inſurrection againſt a tax in a ſouthern county, in which no mention is made of a pretender to the crown, is ſurely not ſo forcible a preſumption againſt him, as the perſuaſion of the northern counties that he was the true heir, is an argument in his favour. Much leſs can it avail againſt ſuch powerful evidence as I have ſhewn exiſts to overturn all that Henry could produce againſt Perkin.

ments to light *: but one thing is ſure, that ſhould any man hereafter preſume to repeat the ſame improbable tale on no better grounds than it has been hitherto urged, he muſt ſhut his eyes againſt conviction, and prefer ridiculous tradition to the ſcepticiſm due to moſt points of hiſtory, and to none more than to that in queſtion.

I have little more to ſay, and only on what regards the perſon of Richard and the ſtory of Jane Shore; but having run counter to a very valuable modern hiſtorian and friend of my own, I muſt both make ſome apology for him, and for myſelf for diſagreeing with him. When Mr. Hume publiſhed his reigns of Edward the fifth, Richard the third, and Henry the ſeventh, the coronation-roll had not come to light. The ſtream of hiſtorians concurred to make him take this portion of our ſtory for granted. Buck had been given up as an advancer of paradoxes, and nobody but Carte had dared to controvert the popular belief. Mr. Hume treats Carte's doubts as whimſical. I wonder he did; he, who, having ſo cloſely examined our hiſtory, had diſcovered how very fallible many of its authorities are. Mr. Hume himſelf had ventured to conteſt both the flattering picture drawn of Edward the firſt, and thoſe ignominious portraits of Edward the ſecond and Richard the ſecond. He had diſcovered from the Fœdera, that Edward the fourth, while ſaid univerſally to be priſoner to archbiſhop Nevil, was at full liberty and doing acts of royal power. Why was it whimſical in Carte to exerciſe the ſame ſpirit of criticiſm? Mr. Hume could not but know how much the characters of princes are liable to be flattered or miſrepreſented. It is of little importance to the world, to Mr. Hume, or to me, whether Richard's ſtory is fairly told or not: and in this amicable diſcuſſion I have no fear of offending him by diſagreeing with him. His abilities and ſagacity do not reſt on the ſhorteſt reign in our annals. I ſhall therefore attempt to give anſwers to the queſtions on which he pins the credibility due to the hiſtory of Richard.

The queſtions are theſe. 1. Had not the queen-mother and the other heads of the York party been fully aſſured of the death of both the young princes, would they have agreed to call over the earl of Richmond, the head of the Lancaſtrian party, and marry him to the princeſs Elizabeth?—I an-

* If diligent ſearch was to be made in the public offices and convents of the Flemiſh towns in which the ducheſs Margaret reſided, I ſhould not deſpair of new lights being gained to that part of our hiſtory.

ſwer,

ſwer, that when the queen-mother could recall that conſent, and ſend to her ſon the marquis Dorſet to quit Richmond, aſſuring him of king Richard's favour to him and her houſe, it is impoſſible to ſay what ſo weak and ambitious a woman would not do. She wanted to have ſome one of her children on the throne, in order to recover her own power. She firſt engaged her daughter to Richmond, and then to Richard. She might not know what was become of her ſons; and yet that is no proof they were murdered. They were out of her power, whatever was become of them; and ſhe was impatient to rule. If ſhe was fully aſſured of their deaths, could Henry, after he came to the crown and had married her daughter, be uncertain of it? I have ſhown that both ſir Thomas More and lord Bacon owned it remained uncertain, and that Henry's account could not be true. As to the heads of the Yorkiſts *; how does it appear they concurred in the projected match? Indeed, who were the heads of that party? Margaret ducheſs of Burgundy, Elizabeth ducheſs of Suffolk, and her children; did they ever concur in that match? Did not they to the end endeavour to defeat and overturn it? I hope Mr. Hume will not call biſhop Morton, the duke of Buckingham, and Margaret counteſs of Richmond, chiefs of the Yorkiſts. 2. The ſtory told conſtantly by Perkin of his eſcape is utterly incredible, that thoſe who were ſent to murder his brother, took pity on him and granted him his liberty.—Anſwer. We do not know but from Henry's narrative and the Lancaſtrian hiſtorians that Perkin gave this account †. I am not authoriſed to believe he did, becauſe

* The exceſſive affection ſhown by the northern counties, where the principal ſtrength of the Yorkiſts lay, to Richard the third while living, and to his memory when dead, implies two things; firſt, that the party did *not* give him up to Henry; ſecondly, that they did not believe he had murdered his nephews. Tyrants of that magnitude are not apt to be popular. Examine the liſt of the chiefs in Henry's army, as ſtated by the Chronicle of Croyland, p. 574, and they will be found Lancaſtrians, or very private gentlemen, and but one peer, the earl of Oxford, a noted Lancaſtrian.

† Grafton has preſerved a ridiculous oration ſaid to be made by Perkin to the king of Scotland, in which this ſilly tale is told. Nothing can be depended upon leſs than ſuch orations, almoſt always forged by the writer, and unpardonable if they paſs the bounds of truth. Perkin, in the paſſage in queſtion, uſes theſe words: "And farther to the entent that my life might be in a ſuretie he (the murderer of my elder brother) appointed one to convey me into ſome ſtraunge countrie, where, when I was furtheſt off, and had moſt neede of comfort, he forſooke me ſodainly (I think he was ſo appointed to do) and left me deſolate alone without friend or knowledge of any reliefe or refuge, &c." Would not one think one was reading the tale of Valentine and Orſon, or any legend of a barbarous age, rather than the Hiſtory of England, when we are told of *ſtrange countries* and ſuch indefinite ramblings, as would paſs only in a nurſery? It remains not only a

becauſe I find no authority for the murder of the elder brother; and if there was, why is it utterly incredible that the younger ſhould have been ſpared? 3. What became of him during the courſe of ſeven years from his ſuppoſed death till his appearance in 1491?—Anſwer. Does uncertainty of where a man has been, prove his non-identity when he appears again? When Mr. Hume will anſwer half the queſtions in this work, I will tell him where Perkin was during thoſe ſeven years. 4. Why were not the queen-mother, the ducheſs of Burgundy, and the other friends of the family, applied to during that time, for his ſupport and education?—Anſwer. Who knows that they were not applied to? The probability is, that they were. The queen's dabbling in the affair of Simnel indicates that ſhe knew her ſon was alive. And when the ducheſs of Burgundy is accuſed of ſetting Perkin to work, it is amazing that ſhe ſhould be quoted as knowing nothing about him. 5. Though the ducheſs of Burgundy at laſt acknowledged him for her nephew, ſhe had loſt all pretence to authority by her former acknowledgement and ſupport of Lambert Simnel, an avowed impoſtor.—Anſwer. Mr. Hume here makes an unwary confeſſion by diſtinguiſhing between Lambert Simnel, an avowed impoſtor, and Perkin, whoſe impoſture was problematic. But if he was a true prince, the ducheſs could only forfeit credit for herſelf, not for him: nor would her preparing the way for her nephew, by firſt playing off and feeling the ground by a counterfeit, be an imputation on her, but rather a proof of her wiſdom and tenderneſs. Impoſtors are eaſily detected, as Simnel was. All Henry's art and power could never verify the cheat of Perkin; and if the latter was aſtoniſhingly adroit, the king was ridiculouſly clumſy. 6. Perkin himſelf confeſſed his impoſture more than once, and read his confeſſion to the people, and renewed his confeſſion at the foot of the gibbet on which he was executed.—Anſwer. I have ſhown that this confeſſion was ſuch an awkward forgery that lord Bacon did not dare to quote or adhere to it, but invented a new ſtory, more ſpecious, but equally inconſiſtent with probability. 7. After Henry the eighth's acceſſion, the titles of the houſes of York and Lancaſter were fully confounded, and there was no longer any neceſſity for defending Henry the ſeventh and his title; yet all the hiſtorians of that time, when the events were recent, ſome of theſe

ſecret but a doubt, whether the elder brother was murdered. If Perkin was the younger, and knew certainly that his brother was put to death, our doubt would vaniſh: but can it vaniſh on no better authority than this fooliſh oration? Did Grafton hear it pronounced? Did king James beſtow his kinſwoman on Perkin, on the ſtrength of ſuch a fable?

hiſtorians,

hiſtorians, ſuch as ſir Thomas More, of the higheſt authority, agree in treating Perkin as an impoſtor.—Anſwer. When ſir Thomas More wrote, Henry the ſeventh was ſtill alive; that argument therefore falls entirely to the ground: but there *was* great neceſſity, I will not ſay to defend, but even to palliate the titles of both Henry the ſeventh and eighth. The former, all the world agrees now, had no title *: the latter had none from his father, and a very defective one from his mother. If ſhe had any right, it could only be after her brothers; and it is not to be ſuppoſed that ſo jealous a tyrant as Henry the eighth would ſuffer it to be ſaid that his father and mother enjoyed the throne to the prejudice of that mother's ſurviving brother, in whoſe blood the father had imbrued his hands. The murder therefore was to be fixed on Richard the third, who was to be ſuppoſed to have uſurped the throne, by murdering, and not, as was really the caſe, by baſtardizing his nephews. If they were illegitimate, ſo was their ſiſter; and if ſhe was, what title had ſhe conveyed to her ſon Henry the eighth? No wonder that both Henries were jealous of the earl of Suffolk, whom one bequeathed to ſlaughter, and the other executed; for if the children of Edward the fourth were ſpurious, and thoſe of Clarence attainted, the right of the houſe of York was veſted in the ducheſs of Suffolk and her deſcendants. The maſſacre of the children of Clarence and the ducheſs of Suffolk ſhow what Henry the eighth thought of the titles both of his father and mother †. But, ſays Mr. Hume, all the hiſtorians of that time agree in treating Perkin as an impoſtor. I have ſhown from their own mouths that they all doubted of it. The reader muſt judge between us. But Mr. Hume ſelects ſir Thomas More as the higheſt authority; I have proved that he was the loweſt—but not in the caſe of Perkin, for ſir Thomas More's hiſtory does not go ſo low; yet happening to mention him, he ſays, the man commonly called Perkin Warbeck was, as well with the princes as the people, held to be the younger ſon of Edward the fourth; and that the deaths of the young king Edward and of Richard his brother had

* Henry was ſo reduced to make out any title to the crown, that he catched even at a quibble. In the act of attainder, paſſed after his acceſſion, he calls himſelf nephew of Henry the ſixth. He was ſo; but it was by his father, who was not of the blood royal. Catherine of Valois, after bearing Henry the ſixth, married Owen Tudor, and had two ſons, Edmund and Jaſper, the former of which married Margaret, mother of Henry the ſeventh, and ſo was he half nephew of Henry the ſixth. On one ſide he had no blood royal, on the other only baſtard blood.

† Obſerve, that when lord Bacon wrote, there *was* great neceſſity to vindicate the title even of Henry the ſeventh, for James the firſt claimed from the eldeſt daughter of Henry and Elizabeth.

come

come ſo far in queſtion, as ſome are yet in doubt, *whether they were deſtroyed or no in the days of king Richard.* Sir Thomas adhered to the affirmative, relying as I have ſhown on very bad authorities. But what is a ſtronger argument ad hominem, I can prove that Mr. Hume did not think ſir Thomas More good authority; no, Mr. Hume was a fairer and more impartial judge: at the very time that he quotes ſir Thomas More, he tacitly rejects his authority; for Mr. Hume, agreeably to truth, ſpecifies the lady Eleanor Butler as the perſon to whom king Edward was contracted, and not Elizabeth Lucy, as it ſtands in ſir Thomas More. An attempt to vindicate Richard will perhaps no longer be thought whimſical, when ſo very acute a reaſoner as Mr. Hume could find no better foundation than theſe ſeven queries on which to reſt his condemnation.

With regard to the perſon of Richard, it appears to have been as much miſrepreſented as his actions. Philip de Comines, who was very free ſpoken even on his own maſters, and therefore not likely to ſpare a foreigner, mentions the beauty of Edward the fourth; but ſays nothing of the deformity of Richard, though he ſaw them together. This is merely negative. The old counteſs of Deſmond, who had danced with Richard, declared he was the handſomeſt man in the room except his brother Edward, and was very well made. But what ſhall we ſay to doctor Shaw, who in his ſermon appealed to the people, whether Richard was not the expreſs image of his father's perſon, who was neither ugly nor deformed? Not all the protector's power could have kept the muſcles of the mob in awe and prevented their laughing at ſo ridiculous an apoſtrophe, had Richard been a little, crooked, withered, hump-backed monſter, as later hiſtorians would have us believe—and very idly. Cannot a foul ſoul inhabit a fair body?

The truth I take to have been this. Richard, who was ſlender and not tall, had one ſhoulder a little higher than the other: a defect, by the magnifying-glaſſes of party, by diſtance of time, and by the amplification of tradition, eaſily ſwelled to ſhocking deformity; for falſehood itſelf generally pays ſo much reſpect to truth as to make it the baſis of its ſuperſtructures.

I have two reaſons for believing Richard was not well made about the ſhoulders. Among the drawings which I purchaſed at Vertue's ſale was one of Richard and his queen, of which nothing is expreſſed but the out-lines.

There is no intimation from whence the drawing was taken; but by a collateral direction for the colour of the robe, if not copied from a picture, it certainly was from ſome painted window; where exiſting I do not pretend to ſay: in this whole work I have not gone beyond my vouchers. Richard's face is very comely, and correſponds ſingularly with the portrait of him in the preface to the royal and noble authors. He has a ſort of tippet of ermine doubled about his neck, which ſeems calculated to diſguiſe ſome want of ſymmetry thereabouts. I have given two * prints of this drawing, which is on large folio paper, that it may lead to a diſcovery of the original, if not deſtroyed.

My other authority is John Rous, the antiquary of Warwickſhire, who ſaw Richard at Warwick in the interval of his two coronations, and who deſcribes him thus: "Parvæ ſtaturæ erat, curtam habens faciem, inæquales humeros, dexter ſuperior, finiſterque inferior." What feature in this portrait gives any idea of a monſter? Or who can believe that an eye-witneſs, and ſo minute a painter, would have mentioned nothing but the inequality of ſhoulders, if Richard's form had been a compound of uglineſs? Could a Yorkiſt have drawn a leſs diſguſting repreſentation? And yet Rous was a vehement Lancaſtrian; and the moment he ceaſed to have truth before his eyes, gave into all the virulence and forgeries of his party, telling us in another place, "that Richard remained two years in his mother's womb, and came forth at laſt with teeth, and hair on his ſhoulders." I leave it to the learned in the profeſſion to decide whether women can go two years with their burden, and produce a living infant: but that this long pregnancy did not prevent the ducheſs his mother from bearing afterwards, I can prove; and could we recover the regiſter of the births of her children, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed to find that, as ſhe was a very fruitful woman, there was not above a year between the birth of Richard and his preceding brother † Tho-

* In the prints, the ſingle head is moſt exactly copied from the drawing, which is unfiniſhed. In the double plate, the reduced likeneſs of the king could not be ſo perfectly preſerved.

† The author I am going to quote gives us the order in which the ducheſs Cecily's children were born, thus: Ann ducheſs of Exeter, Henry, Edward the fourth, Edmund earl of Rutland, Elizabeth ducheſs of Suffolk, Margaret ducheſs of Burgundy, William, John, George duke of Clarence, Thomas, Richard the third, and Urſula. Cox, in his Hiſtory of Ireland, ſays that Clarence was born in 1451. Buck computed Richard the third to have fallen at the age of thirty-four or five; but, by Cox's account, he could not be more than thirty-two. Still this makes it probable, that their mother bore them and their intervening brother Thomas as ſoon as ſhe well could one after another.

mas. However, an ancient * bard, who wrote after Richard was born and during the life of his father, tells us,

> Richard liveth yit, but the laſt of all
> Was Urſula, to him whom God liſt call.

Be it as it will, this fooliſh tale, with the circumſtances of his being born with hair and teeth, was coined to intimate how careful Providence was when it formed a tyrant, to give due warning of what was to be expected. And yet theſe portents were far from prognoſticating a tyrant; for this plain reaſon, that all other tyrants have been born without theſe prognoſtics. Does it require more time to ripen a fœtus, that is to prove a deſtroyer, than it takes to form an Ariſtides? Are there outward and viſible ſigns of a bloody nature? Who was handſomer than Alexander, Auguſtus, or Louis the fourteenth? And yet who ever commanded the ſpilling of more human blood?

Having mentioned John Rous, it is neceſſary I ſhould ſay ſomething more of him, as he lived in Richard's time, and even wrote his reign; and yet I have omitted him in the liſt of contemporary writers. The truth is, he was pointed out to me after the preceding ſheets were finiſhed; and upon inſpection I found him too deſpicable and lying an author, even amongſt monkiſh authors, to venture to quote him, but for two facts; for the one of which, as he was an eye-witneſs, and for the other, as it was of public notoriety, he is competent authority.

The firſt is his deſcription of the perſon of Richard; the ſecond, relating to the young earl of Warwick, I have recorded in its place.

This John Rous, ſo early as in the reign of Edward the fourth, had retired to the hermitage of Guy's cliff, where he was a chantry prieſt, and where he ſpent the remaining part of his life in what he called ſtudying and writing antiquities. Amongſt other works, moſt of which are *not* unfortunately loſt, he compoſed a hiſtory of the kings of England. It begins with the creation, and is compiled indiſcriminately from the Bible and from monaſtic writers. Moſes, he tells us, does not mention all the cities founded before the deluge, but Barnard de Breydenback, dean of Mayence, does.

* See Vincent's Errors in Brooke's Heraldry, p. 623.

With

With the ſame taſte he acquaints us, that though the book of Geneſis ſays nothing of the matter, Giraldus Cambrenſis writes, that Caphera or Ceſara, Noah's niece, being apprehenſive of the deluge, ſet out for Ireland, where with three men and fifty women ſhe arrived ſafe with one ſhip, the reſt periſhing in the general deſtruction.

A hiſtory ſo happily begun never falls off: prophecies, omens, judgments, and religious foundations, compoſe the bulk of the book. The lives and actions of our monarchs, and the great events of their reigns, ſeemed to the author to deſerve little place in a hiſtory of England. The lives of Henry the ſixth and Edward the fourth, though the author lived under both, take up but two pages in octavo, and that of Richard the third, three. We may judge how qualified ſuch an author was to clear up a period ſo obſcure, or what ſecrets could come to his knowledge at Guy's cliff: accordingly he retails all the vulgar reports of the times; as that Richard poiſoned his wife, and put his nephews to death, though he owns few knew in what manner; but as he lays the ſcene of their deaths *before* Richard's aſſumption of the crown, it is plain he was the worſt informed of all. To Richard he aſcribes the death of Henry the ſixth; and adds, that many perſons believed he executed the murder with his own hands: but he records another circumſtance that alone muſt weaken all ſuſpicion of Richard's guilt in that tranſaction. Richard not only cauſed the body to be removed from Chertſey and ſolemnly interred at Windſor, but it was publicly expoſed, and, if we will believe the monk, was found almoſt entire, and emitted a gracious perfume, though no care had been taken to embalm it. Is it credible that Richard, if the murderer, would have exhibited this unneceſſary mummery, only to revive the memory of his own guilt? Was it not rather intended to recall the cruelty of his brother Edward, whoſe children he had ſet aſide, and whom, by the compariſon of this act of piety, he hoped to * depreciate in the eyes of the people? The very example had been pointed out to him by Henry the fifth, who beſtowed a pompous funeral on Richard the ſecond, murdered by order of his father.

Indeed the devotion of Rous to that Lancaſtrian ſaint, Henry the ſixth, ſeems chiefly to engroſs his attention, and yet it draws him into a contra-

* This is not a mere random conjecture, but corroborated by another inſtance of like addreſs. He diſforeſted a large circuit, which Edward had annexed to the foreſt of Whichwoode, to the great annoyance of the ſubject. This we are told by Rous himſelf, p. 216.

diction; for, having ſaid that the murder of Henry the ſixth had made Richard deteſted by all nations who heard of it, he adds, two pages afterwards, that an embaſſy arrived at Warwick (while Richard kept his court there) from the * king of Spain, to propoſe a marriage between their children. Of this embaſſy Rous is a proper witneſs: Guy's cliff, I think, is but a mile from Warwick; and he is too circumſtantial on what paſſed there not to have been on the ſpot. In other reſpects he ſeems inclined to be impartial, recording ſeveral good and generous acts of Richard.

But there is one circumſtance, which, beſides the weakneſs and credulity of the man, renders his teſtimony exceeding ſuſpicious. After having ſaid that, *if he may ſpeak truth in Richard's favour* †, he muſt own that, though ſmall in ſtature and ſtrength, Richard was a noble knight, and defended himſelf to the laſt breath with eminent valour, the monk ſuddenly turns and apoſtrophizes Henry the ſeventh, to whom he had dedicated his work, and whom he flatters to the beſt of his poor abilities; but above all things for having beſtowed the name of Arthur on his eldeſt ſon, who, this injudicious and over-haſty prophet foreſees, will reſtore the glory of his great anceſtor of the ſame name. Had Henry chriſtened his ſecond ſon Merlin, I do not doubt but poor Rous would have had ſtill more divine viſions about Henry the eighth, though born to ſhake half the pillars of credulity.

In ſhort, no reliance can be had on an author of ſuch a frame of mind, ſo removed from the ſcene of action, and ſo devoted to the Welſh intruder on the throne. Super-added to this incapacity and defects, he had prejudices or attachments of a private nature: he had ſingular affection for the Beauchamps, earls of Warwick, zealous Lancaſtrians, and had written their lives. One capital crime that he imputes to Richard is the impriſonment of his mother-in-law, Ann Beauchamp counteſs of Warwick, mother of his queen. It does ſeem that this great lady was very hardly treated; but I have ſhown from the Chronicle of Croyland, that it was Edward the fourth, not Richard, that ſtripped her of her poſſeſſions. She was widow too of that turbulent

* Drake ſays, that an embaſſador from the queen of Spain was preſent at Richard's coronation at York. Rous himſelf owns, that amidſt a great concourſe of nobility that attended the king at York, was the duke of Albany, brother of the king of Scotland. Richard therefore appears not to have been abhorred by either the courts of Spain or Scotland.

† Attamen ſi ad ejus honorem veritatem dicam, p. 218.

Warwick, the king-maker; and Henry the ſeventh bore witneſs that ſhe was faithfully loyal to Henry the ſixth. Still it ſeems extraordinary that the queen did not or could not obtain the enlargement of her mother. When Henry the ſeventh attained the crown, ſhe recovered her liberty and vaſt eſtates: yet young as his majeſty was both in years and avarice, for this munificence took place in his third year, ſtill he gave evidence of the falſehood and rapacity of his nature; for though by act of parliament he cancelled the former act that had deprived her, *as againſt all reaſon, conſcience, and courſe of nature, and contrary to the laws of God and man* *, and reſtored her poſſeſſions to her, this was but a farce, and like his wonted hypocriſy; for the very ſame year he obliged her to convey the whole eſtate to him, leaving her nothing but the manor of Sutton for her maintenance. Richard had married her daughter; but what claim had Henry to her inheritance? This attachment of Rous to the houſe of Beauchamp, and the dedication of his work to Henry, would make his teſtimony moſt ſuſpicious, even if he had guarded his work within the rules of probability, and not rendered it a contemptible legend.

Every part of Richard's ſtory is involved in obſcurity: we neither know what natural children he had, nor what became of them. Sandford ſays he had a daughter called Katherine, whom William Herbert earl of Huntingdon covenanted to marry, and to make her a fair and ſufficient eſtate of certain of his manors to the yearly value of 200l. over and above all charges. As this lord received a confirmation of his title from Henry the ſeventh, no doubt the poor young lady would have been ſacrificed to that intereſt. But Dugdale ſeems to think ſhe died before the nuptials were conſummated: "whether this marriage took effect or not, I cannot ſay; for ſure it is that ſhe died in her tender years †." Drake ‡ affirms, that Richard knighted at York a natural ſon called Richard of Glouceſter, and ſuppoſes it to be the ſame perſon of whom Peck has preſerved ſo extraordinary an account §. But never was a ſuppoſition worſe grounded. The relation given by the latter of himſelf was, that he never ſaw the king till the night before the battle of Boſworth; and that the king had not then acknowledged, but intended to acknowledge him, if victorious. The deep privacy in which this perſon had

* V. Dugdale's Warwickſhire in Beauchamp.
† Baronage, p. 258.
‡ In his Hiſtory of York.
§ See his Deſiderata curioſa.

lived, demonſtrates how ſeverely the perſecution had raged againſt all that were connected with Richard, and how little truth was to be expected from the writers on the other ſide. Nor could Peck's Richard Plantagenet be the ſame perſon with Richard of Glouceſter, for the former was never known till he diſcovered himſelf to ſir Thomas Moyle; and Hall ſays that king Richard's natural ſon was in the hands of Henry the ſeventh. Buck ſays, that Richard made his ſon Richard of Glouceſter captain of Calais; but it appears from Rymer's Fœdera, that Richard's natural ſon, who was captain of Calais, was called John. None of theſe accounts accord with Peck's; nor, for want of knowing his mother, can we gueſs why king Richard was more ſecret on the birth of this ſon (if Peck's Richard Plantagenet was truly ſo) than on thoſe of his other natural children. Perhaps the trueſt remark that can be made on this whole ſtory is, that the avidity with which our hiſtorians ſwallowed one groſs ill-concocted legend, prevented them from deſiring or daring to ſift a ſingle part of it. If crumbs of truth are mingled with it, at leaſt they are now undiſtinguiſhable in ſuch a maſs of error and improbability.

It is evident from the conduct of Shakeſpeare, that the houſe of Tudor retained all their Lancaſtrian prejudices, even in the reign of queen Elizabeth. In his play of Richard the third, he ſeems to deduce the woes of the houſe of York from the curſes which queen Margaret had vented againſt them; and he could not give that weight to her curſes, without ſuppoſing a right in her to utter them. This indeed is the authority which I do not pretend to combat. Shakeſpeare's immortal ſcenes will exiſt, when ſuch poor arguments as mine are forgotten. Richard at leaſt will be tried and executed on the ſtage, when his defence remains on ſome obſcure ſhelf of a library. But while theſe pages may excite the curioſity of a day, it may not be unentertaining to obſerve, that there is another of Shakeſpeare's plays that may be ranked among the hiſtoric, though not one of his numerous critics and commentators have diſcovered the drift of it; I mean *The Winter Evening's Tale*, which was certainly intended (in compliment to queen Elizabeth) as an indirect apology for her mother Anne Boleyn. The addreſs of the poet appears no where to more advantage. The ſubject was too delicate to be exhibited on the ſtage without a veil; and it was too recent, and touched the queen too nearly, for the bard to have ventured ſo home an alluſion on

any

any other ground than compliment. The unreaſonable jealouſy of Leontes, and his violent conduct in conſequence, form a true portrait of Henry the eighth, who generally made the law the engine of his boiſterous paſſions. Not only the general plan of the ſtory is moſt applicable, but ſeveral paſſages are ſo marked, that they touch the real hiſtory nearer than the fable. Hermione on her trial ſays,

———for honour,
'Tis a derivative from me to mine,
And only that I ſtand for.

This ſeems to be taken from the very letter of Anne Boleyn to the king before her execution, where ſhe pleads for the infant princeſs his daughter. Mamillius, the young prince, an unneceſſary character, dies in his infancy; but it confirms the alluſion, as queen Anne, before Elizabeth, bore a ſtillborn ſon. But the moſt ſtriking paſſage, and which had nothing to do in the tragedy, but as it pictured Elizabeth, is where Paulina, deſcribing the new-born princeſs and her likeneſs to her father, ſays, *ſhe has the very trick of his frown.* There is one ſentence indeed ſo applicable, both to Elizabeth and her father, that I ſhould ſuſpect the poet inſerted it after her death. Paulina, ſpeaking of the child, tells the king,

———'Tis yours;
And might we lay the old proverb to your charge,
So like you, 'tis the worſe.——

The Winter Evening's Tale was therefore in reality a ſecond part of Henry the eighth.

With regard to Jane Shore, I have already ſhown that it was her connection with the marquis Dorſet, not with lord Haſtings, that drew on her the reſentment of Richard. When an event is thus wreſted to ſerve the purpoſe of a party, we ought to be very cautious how we truſt an hiſtorian who is capable of employing truth only as cement in a fabric of fiction. Sir Thomas More tells us, that Richard pretended Jane "was of councell with the lord Haſtings to deſtroy him; and in concluſion, when no colour could faſten upon theſe matters, then he layd ſeriouſly to her charge what ſhe coud not deny," namely, her adultery; "and for this cauſe, as a godly continent prince,

prince, cleane and fautleſſe of himſelf, ſent out of heaven into this vicious world for the amendment of mens manners, he cauſed the biſhop of London to put her to open penance."

This ſarcaſm on Richard's morals would have had more weight, if the author had before confined himſelf to deliver nothing but the preciſe truth. He does not ſeem to be more exact in what relates to the penance itſelf. Richard, by his proclamation, taxed miſtreſs Shore with plotting treaſon in confederacy with the marquis Dorſet. Conſequently, it was not from defect of proof of her being accomplice with lord Haſtings that ſhe was put to open penance. If Richard had any hand in that ſentence, it was becauſe he *had* proof of her plotting with the marquis. But I doubt, and with ſome reaſon, whether her penance was inflicted by Richard. We have ſeen that he acknowledged at leaſt two natural children; and ſir Thomas More hints that Richard was far from being remarkable for his chaſtity. Is it therefore probable, that he acted ſo ſilly a farce as to make his brother's miſtreſs do penance? Moſt of the charges on Richard are ſo idle, that inſtead of being an able and artful uſurper, as his antagoniſts allow, he muſt have been a weaker hypocrite than ever attempted to wreſt a ſceptre out of the hands of a legal poſſeſſor.

It is more likely that the churchmen were the authors of Jane's penance; and that Richard, intereſted to manage that body, and provoked by her connection with ſo capital an enemy as Dorſet, might give her up, and permit the clergy (who probably had burned incenſe to her in her proſperity) to revenge his quarrel. My reaſon for this opinion is grounded on a letter of Richard extant in the Muſeum, by which it appears that the fair, unfortunate, and amiable Jane (for her virtues far out-weighed her frailty), being a priſoner by Richard's order in Ludgate, had captivated the king's ſollicitor, who contracted to marry her. Here follows the letter:

Harl. MSS. N° 2378.

By the KING.

"Right reverend fadre in God, &c. Signifying unto you, that it is ſhewed unto us, that our ſervaunt and ſollicitor Thomas Lynom, merveilouſly blinded and abuſed with the late (wife) of Willm Shore, now being in

in Ludgate by oure commandment, hath made contract of matrymony with hir (as it is ſaid) and entendith, to our full grete merveile, to procede to th'effect of the ſame. We for many cauſes wold be ſory that hee ſoo ſhulde be diſpoſed. Pray you therefore to ſend for him, and in that ye goodly may exhorte and ſture hym to the contrarye. And if ye finde him utterly ſet for to marye hur, and noen otherwiſe will be advertiſed, then (if it may ſtand with the lawe of the churche) We be content (the tyme of mariage deferred to our comyng next to London) that upon ſufficient ſuretie founde of hure good abering, ye doo ſend for hure keeper, and diſcharge him of our ſaid commandment by warrant of theſe, committing hur to the rule and guiding of hure fadre, or any othre by your diſcretion in the mene ſeaſon. Yeven, &c.

To the right reverend fadre in God, &c. the biſhop of Lincoln, our chauncellor."

It appears from this letter, that Richard thought it indecent for his ſollicitor to marry a woman who had ſuffered public puniſhment for adultery, and who was confined by his command—but where is the tyrant to be found in this paper? Or what prince ever ſpoke of ſuch a ſcandal, and, what is ſtronger, of ſuch contempt of his authority, with ſo much lenity and temper? He enjoins his chancellor to diſſuade the ſollicitor from the match—but ſhould he perſiſt—A tyrant would have ordered the ſollicitor to priſon too—but Richard—Richard, if his ſervant will not be diſſuaded, allows the match; and in the mean time commits Jane—to whoſe cuſtody?—her own father's. I cannot help thinking that ſome holy perſon had been her perſecutor, and not ſo patient and gentle a king. And I believe ſo, becauſe of the ſalvo for the church: "let them be married, ſays Richard, if it may ſtand with the law of the churche."

From the propoſed marriage, one ſhould at firſt conclude that Shore, the former huſband of Jane, was dead; but by the king's query, whether the marriage would be lawful? and by her being called in the letter *the late wife of William Shore*, not *of the late William Shore*, I ſhould ſuppoſe that her huſband was living, and that the penance itſelf was the conſequence of a ſuit preferred by him to the eccleſiaſtic court for divorce. If the injured huſband ventured, on the death of Edward the fourth, to petition to be ſeparated from

from his wife, it was natural enough for the church to proceed farther, and enjoin her to perform penance, eſpecially when they fell in with the king's reſentment to her. Richard's proclamation and the letter above-recited ſeem to point out this account of Jane's misfortunes; the letter implying, that Richard doubted whether her divorce was ſo complete as to leave her at liberty to take another huſband. As we hear no more of the marriage, and as Jane to her death retained the name of Shore, my ſolution is corroborated; the chancellor-biſhop, no doubt, going more roundly to work than the king had done. Nor, however ſir Thomas More reviles Richard for his cruel uſage of miſtreſs Shore, did either of the ſucceeding kings redreſs her wrongs, though ſhe lived to the eighteenth year of Henry the eighth. She had ſown her good deeds, her good offices, her alms, her charities, in a court. Not one took root; nor did the ungrateful ſoil repay her a grain of relief in her penury and comfortleſs old age.

I have thus gone through the ſeveral accuſations againſt Richard; and have ſhown that they reſt on the ſlighteſt and moſt ſuſpicious ground, if they reſt on any at all. I have proved that they ought to be reduced to the ſole authorities of ſir Thomas More and Henry the ſeventh; the latter intereſted to blacken and miſrepreſent every action of Richard; and perhaps driven to father on him even his own crimes. I have proved that More's account cannot be true. I have ſhown that the writers, contemporary with Richard, either do not accuſe him, or give their accuſations as mere vague and uncertain reports: and what is as ſtrong, the writers next in date, and who wrote the earlieſt after the events are ſaid to have happened, aſſert little or nothing from their own information, but adopt the very words of ſir Thomas More, who was abſolutely miſtaken or miſinformed.

For the ſake of thoſe who have a mind to canvaſs this ſubject, I will recapitulate the moſt material arguments that tend to diſprove what has been aſſerted; but as I attempt not to affirm what *did* happen in a period that will ſtill remain very obſcure, I flatter myſelf that I ſhall not be thought either fantaſtic or paradoxical, for not blindly adopting an improbable tale, which our hiſtorians have never given themſelves the trouble to examine.

What miſtakes I may have made myſelf, I ſhall be willing to acknowledge; what weak reaſoning, to give up: but I ſhall not think a long chain of arguments,

guments, of proofs and probabilities, is confuted at once, becauſe ſome ſingle fact may be found erroneous. Much leſs ſhall I be diſpoſed to take notice of detached or trifling cavils. The work itſelf is but an enquiry into a ſhort portion of our annals. I ſhall be content if I have informed or amuſed my readers, or thrown any light on ſo clouded a ſcene; but I cannot be of opinion that a period thus diſtant deſerves to take up more time than I have already beſtowed upon it.

It ſeems then to me to appear,

That Fabian and the authors of the Chronicle of Croyland, who were contemporaries with Richard, charge him directly with none of the crimes, ſince imputed to him, and diſculpate him of others.

That John Rous, the third contemporary, could know the facts he alleges but by hearſay, confounds the date of them, dedicated his work to Henry the ſeventh, and is an author to whom no credit is due, from the lies and fables with which his work is ſtuffed.

That we have no authors who lived near the time but Lancaſtrian authors, who wrote to flatter Henry the ſeventh, or who ſpread the tales which he invented.

That the murder of prince Edward, ſon of Henry the ſixth, was committed by king Edward's ſervants, and is imputed to Richard by no contemporary.

That Henry the ſixth was found dead in the Tower; that it was not known how he came by his death; and that it was againſt Richard's intereſt to murder him.

That the duke of Clarence was defended by Richard; that the parliament petitioned for his execution; that no author of the time is ſo abſurd as to charge Richard with being the executioner; and that king Edward took the deed wholly on himſelf.

That Richard's ſtay at York on his brother's death had no appearance of a deſign to make himſelf king.

That the ambition of the queen, who attempted to uſurp the government, contrary to the then eſtabliſhed cuſtom of the realm, gave the firſt provocation to Richard and the princes of the blood to aſſert their rights; and that Richard was ſolicited by the duke of Buckingham to vindicate thoſe rights.

That the preparation of an armed force under earl Rivers, the ſeizure of the Tower and treaſure, and the equipment of a fleet by the marquis Dorſet, gave occaſion to the princes to impriſon the relations of the queen; and that, though they were put to death without trial (the only cruelty which is *proved* on Richard), it was conſonant to the manners of that barbarous and turbulent age, and not till after the queen's party had taken up arms.

That the execution of lord Haſtings, who had firſt engaged with Richard againſt the queen, and whom ſir Thomas More confeſſes Richard was *lothe to loſe*, can be accounted for by nothing but abſolute neceſſity, and the law of ſelf-defence.

That Richard's aſſumption of the protectorate was in every reſpect agreeable to the laws and uſage; was probably beſtowed on him by the univerſal conſent of the council and peers, and was a ſtrong indication that he had then no thought of queſtioning the right of his nephew.

That the tale of Richard aſperſing the chaſtity of his own mother is incredible, it appearing that he lived with her in perfect harmony, and lodged with her in her palace at that very time.

That it is as little credible that Richard gained the crown by a ſermon of doctor Shaw, and a ſpeech of the duke of Buckingham, if the people only laughed at thoſe orators.

That there had been a precontract or marriage between Edward the fourth and lady Eleanor Talbot; and that Richard's claim to the crown was founded on the illegitimacy of Edward's children.

That

That a convention of the nobility, clergy, and people, invited him to accept the crown on that title.

That the enſuing parliament ratified the act of the convention, and confirmed the baſtardy of Edward's children.

That nothing can be more improbable than Richard's having taken no meaſures before he left London to have his nephews murdered, if he had any ſuch intention.

That the ſtory of ſir James Tirrel, as related by ſir Thomas More, is a notorious falſehood; ſir James Tirrel being at that time maſter of the horſe, in which capacity he had walked at Richard's coronation.

That Tirrel's jealouſy of ſir Richard Ratcliffe is another palpable falſehood; Tirrel being already preferred, and Ratcliffe abſent.

That all that relates to ſir Robert Brakenbury is no leſs falſe: Brakenbury either being too good a man to die for a tyrant or murderer, or too bad a man to have refuſed being his accomplice.

That ſir Thomas More and lord Bacon both confeſs that many doubted whether the two princes were murdered in Richard's days or not; and it certainly never was proved that they were murdered by Richard's order.

That ſir Thomas More relied on nameleſs and uncertain authority; that it appears by dates and facts that his authorities were bad and falſe; that if ſir James Tirrel and Dighton had really committed the murder and confeſſed it, and if Perkin Warbeck had made a voluntary, clear, and probable confeſſion of his impoſture, there could have remained no doubt of the murder.

That Greene, the nameleſs page, and Will Slaughter, having never been queſtioned about the murder, there is no reaſon to believe what is related of them in the ſuppoſed tragedy.

That ſir James Tirrel not being attainted on the death of Richard, but having, on the contrary, been employed in great ſervices by Henry the

ſeventh, it is not probable that he was one of the murderers. That lord Bacon owning that Tirrel's confeſſion did not pleaſe the king ſo well as Dighton's; that Tirrel's impriſonment and execution ſome years afterwards for a new treaſon, of which we have no evidence, and which appears to have been mere ſuſpicion, deſtroy all probability of his guilt in the ſuppoſed murder of the children.

That the impunity of Dighton, if really guilty, was ſcandalous; and can only be accounted for on the ſuppoſition of his being a falſe witneſs to ſerve Henry's cauſe againſt Perkin Warbeck.

That the ſilence of the two archbiſhops, and Henry's not daring to ſpecify the murder of the princes in the act of attainder againſt Richard, wear all the appearance of their not having been murdered.

That Richard's tenderneſs and kindneſs to the earl of Warwick, proceeding ſo far as to proclaim him his ſucceſſor, betrays no ſymptom of that cruel nature which would not ſtick at aſſaſſinating any competitor.

That it is indubitable that Richard's firſt idea was to keep the crown but till Edward the fifth ſhould attain the age of twenty-four.

That with this view he did *not* create his own ſon prince of Wales till after he had proved the baſtardy of his brother's children.

That there is no proof that thoſe children were murdered.

That Richard made, or intended to make, his nephew Edward the fifth walk at his coronation.

That there is ſtrong preſumption from the Parliament-roll and from the Chronicle of Croyland, that both princes were living ſome time after ſir Thomas More fixes the dates of their deaths.

That when his own ſon was dead, Richard was ſo far from intending to get rid of his wife, that he proclaimed his nephews, firſt the earl of Warwick, and then the earl of Lincoln, his heirs apparent.

That

That there is not the leaſt probability of his having poiſoned his wife, who died of a languiſhing diſtemper; that no proof was ever pretended to be given of it; that a bare ſuppoſition of ſuch a crime, without proofs or very ſtrong preſumptions, is ſcarce ever to be credited.

That he ſeems to have had no intention of marrying his niece, but to have amuſed her with the hopes of that match, to prevent her marrying Richmond.

That Buck would not have dared to quote her letter as extant in the earl of Arundel's library, if it had not been there; that others of Buck's aſſertions, having been corroborated by ſubſequent diſcoveries, leave no doubt of his veracity on this; and that that letter diſculpates Richard from poiſoning his wife; and only ſhews the impatience of his niece to be queen.

That it is probable the queen-dowager knew her ſecond ſon was living, and connived at the appearance of Lambert Simnel, to feel the temper of the nation.

That Henry the ſeventh certainly thought that ſhe and the earl of Lincoln were privy to the exiſtence of Richard duke of York, and that Henry lived in terror of his appearance.

That the different conduct of Henry with regard to Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, implies how different an opinion he had of them; that in the firſt caſe he uſed the moſt natural and moſt rational methods to prove him an impoſtor, whereas his whole behaviour in Perkin's caſe was myſterious, and betrayed his belief or doubt that Warbeck was the true duke of York.

That it was morally impoſſible for the ducheſs of Burgundy at the diſtance of twenty-ſeven years to inſtruct a Flemiſh lad ſo perfectly in all that had paſſed in the court of England, that he would not have been detected in a few hours.

That ſhe could not inform him, nor could he know, what paſſed in the Tower, unleſs he was the true duke of York.

That if he was not the true duke of York, Henry had nothing to do but confront him with Tirrel and Dighton, and the impoſture muſt have been diſcovered.

That Perkin never being confronted with the queen-dowager and the princeſſes her daughters, proves that Henry did not dare to truſt to their acknowledging him.

That if he was not the true duke of York, he might have been detected by not knowing the queens and princeſſes, if ſhown to him, without his being told who they were.

That it is not pretended that Perkin ever failed in language, accent, or circumſtances; and that his likeneſs to Edward the fourth is allowed.

That there are groſs and manifeſt blunders in his pretended confeſſion.

That Henry was ſo afraid of not aſcertaining a good account of the purity of his Engliſh accent, that he makes him learn Engliſh twice over.

That lord Bacon did not dare to adhere to this ridiculous account, but forges another, though in reality not much more credible.

That a number of Henry's beſt friends, as the lord chamberlain, who placed the crown on his head, knights of the garter, and men of the faireſt characters, being perſuaded that Perkin was the true duke of York, and dying for that belief, without recanting, makes it very raſh to deny that he was not ſo.

That the proclamation in Rymer's Fœdera againſt Jane Shore, for plotting with the marquis Dorſet, not with lord Haſtings, deſtroys all the credit of ſir Thomas More, as to what relates to the latter peer.

In ſhort, that Henry's character, as we have received it from his own apologiſts, is ſo much worſe and more hateful than Richard's, that we may well believe Henry invented and propagated by far the greater part of the

ſlanders againſt Richard: that Henry, not Richard, probably put to death the true duke of York, as he did the earl of Warwick: and that we are not certain whether Edward the fifth was murdered; nor, if he was, by whoſe order he was murdered.

After all that has been ſaid, it is ſcarce neceſſary to add a word on the ſuppoſed diſcovery that was made of the ſkeletons of the two young princes, in the reign of Charles the ſecond. Two ſkeletons found in the dark abyſs of ſo many ſecret tranſactions, with no marks to aſcertain the time, the age of their interment, can certainly verify nothing. We muſt believe both princes died there, before we can believe that their bones were found there: and upon what that belief can be founded, or how we ſhall ceaſe to doubt whether Perkin Warbeck was not one of thoſe children, I am at a loſs to gueſs.

As little is it requiſite to argue on the grants made by Richard the third to his ſuppoſed accomplices in that murder, becauſe the argument will ſerve either way. It was very natural that they who had taſted moſt of Richard's bounty ſhould be ſuſpected as the inſtruments of his crimes. But till it can be proved that thoſe crimes were committed, it is in vain to bring evidence to ſhow who aſſiſted him in perpetrating them. For my own part, I know not what to think of the death of Edward the fifth: I can neither entirely acquit Richard of it, nor condemn him; becauſe there are no proofs on either ſide; and though a court of juſtice would, from that defect of evidence, abſolve him, opinion may fluctuate backwards and forwards, and at laſt remain in ſuſpenſe.

For the younger brother, the balance ſeems to incline greatly on the ſide of Perkin Warbeck, as the true duke of York; and if one was ſaved, one knows not how or why to believe that Richard deſtroyed only the elder.

We muſt leave this whole ſtory dark, though not near ſo dark as we found it: and it is perhaps as wiſe to be uncertain on one portion of our hiſtory, as to believe ſo much as is believed in all hiſtories, though very probably as falſely delivered to us as the period which we have here been examining.

ADDITION.

ADDITION.

The following notice, obligingly communicated to me by Mr. Stanley, came too late to be inſerted in the body of the work, and yet ought not to be omitted.

After the death of Perkin Warbeck, his widow the lady Catherine Gordon, daughter of the earl of Huntley, from her exquiſite beauty, and upon account of her huſband, called *The white Roſe of Scotland*, was married to ſir Matthew Cradock, and is buried with him in Herbert's iſle, in Swanſea church in Wales, where their tomb is ſtill to be ſeen, with this inſcription in ancient characters:

"Here lies Sr Mathie Cradok knight, ſume time deputie unto the right honorable Charles Erle of Worcets in the countie of Glamorgan, R. Attor. G. R. Chauncelor of the ſame, ſteward of Gower and Hilvei, and mi ladie Katerin his wife."

They had a daughter Mary, who was married to ſir Edward Herbert, ſon of the firſt earl of Pembroke; and from that match are deſcended the earls of Pembroke and Powis, Hans Stanley, eſq. George Rice, eſq. &c.

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

HISTORIC DOUBTS

ON THE

Life and Reign of King RICHARD III.

With REMARKS on ſome ANSWERS that have been made to that Work.

Quoth Hudibras, I now perceive
You are no conjurer, by your leave.
That paltry ſtory is untrue,
And forg'd to cheat ſuch gulls as you.

Hud. part II, cant. 3.

WHEN I publiſhed my doubts on the reign of king Richard the third, I concluded, from the obſcurity of the ſubject, and from my own want of abilities, and ſuperficial knowledge of our ſtory, that men of deeper reading and maſters of ſounder reaſoning would eaſily overthrow my arguments [though offered but as doubts], and would deſtroy what foundations I had pretended to lay, though corroborated by ſome facts, and eſtabliſhed on ſome new and not totally deſpicable materials. To this humiliation, for the ſake of truth, and of clearing up a very dark and intricate period, I was ready to ſubmit. I wiſhed to ſee a fooliſh and abſurd tale removed from the pages of our graveſt hiſtorians; and flattered myſelf, that not only the ridiculous and incoherent parts of the legend would be given up by men of ſenſe,

but that ſome able writer would deign to ſtate the whole matter in ſo clear and conſiſtent a manner, that not only my doubts [which indeed are of little importance to any body] would be removed, but that the hiſtory of that period would receive ſuch ſatisfactory, at leaſt probable lights, as would prevent the reign of Richard from diſgracing our annals by an intruſion of mob-ſtories and childiſh improbabilities, which at preſent in our beſt hiſtorians place that reign on a level with the ſtory of Jack the giant-killer.

The remoteneſs of the time in queſtion gave me thoſe hopes. I ſhould not indeed have been ſo weak as to flatter myſelf, while the ſpirit of party is in full vigour, that any conceſſions on later reigns would be made to a candid enquirer after truth. That perverſe ſpirit, wilfully blind, adheres obſtinately to the ſacred diſputes of our anceſtors, and renders our hiſtory but a more bulky compilation of controverſial pamphlets. To this hour the reigns of the Stuarts, the moſt ignominious period of our annals, are defended, juſtified, varniſhed, nay panegyricized, by able writers as well as by the moſt contemptible; as if that diſgraceful ſucceſſion was the favourite portion of our hiſtory with our favourite hiſtorians. Elizabeth and Cromwell, who, with all their faults, raiſed the dignity and honour of our country, and made it the terror of foreign nations, conſoling us at leaſt by national glory for national ſervitude, are depreſſed and vilified, in compliment to a deſpicable race, who with equal ambition were deſtitute of every talent to ſupport it, and who naturally ſunk in the eſteem of Europe, as faſt as they loſt the hearts and reſpect of their own ſubjects.

The ſatisfaction I expected, nobody has deigned to give me; and were I ſo idly vain as to conclude, becauſe my arguments have *not* been anſwered, that therefore they are unanfwerable, I might indulge myſelf in the deluſion of thinking that I have done ſome ſervice to our hiſtory in clearing away a load of rubbiſh, that had obtained a preſcriptive right of lying in the way of our hiſtorians, merely becauſe it had been careleſsly thrown there by writers, whoſe very dirt and mortar paſſed for buildings. Far from ſuch preſumption, I am perſuaded that my doubts have not ſeemed to deſerve an anſwer from thoſe who are capable of giving one. To ſuch men I muſt have appeared a paradoxical writer; and the ſtory of Richard the third with all its abſurdities is ſtill deemed authentic, *becauſe* ſir Thomas More, who wrote it in his youth, proved afterwards a very great man; and *becauſe* lord Bacon, who copied

copied it afterwards into a fulſome panegyric, and who however corrected the original ſilly account without making it conſiſtent, was the founder of modern philoſophy, and as bright a genius as ever ſhone in the orb of literature. Nobody reſpects ſuch great names more than I do. Yet, if whatever fell from the pen of More be holy writ, why ſhould we not embrace his religion as well as his hiſtory? In his graver years he fell into all the follies of enthuſiaſm and bigotry, which he had ridiculed in his youth. I have ſhown many palpable falſities in his hiſtory. It is a poor refuge to ſet up his name againſt his miſtakes: and methinks of all men living a ſceptic philoſopher is the laſt one ſhould expect to find pinning his faith on the ſleeve of reverend authority. Lord Bacon is ſtill leſs entitled to our implicit aſſent. To ſay nothing of his ſlaviſh flattery to his living maſters, can that man be received as an hiſtorian of unqueſtionable veracity, who has laboured to conſecrate the crimes of Henry the ſeventh, and held forth the meaneſt tyrant as the model of political wiſdom? Such hiſtorians ſtain the records of truth, and no talents can reſcue their characters from contempt. To enſhrine guilt, is ſinning againſt virtue and wounding poſterity. Tyrants are lulled with the hope of finding ſimilar panegyriſts: and as hiſtory is the tribunal at which all princes muſt appear, ſhall the bad dare to hope for advocates at that bar? Shall Henry the ſeventh of England and Henry the fourth of France receive the ſame palm from the ſame judicatory?

I am ſorry to be forced to repeat theſe arguments, having mentioned them before; but ſuch magic is there in great names, and it is ſo commode to uſe them inſtead of reaſons, that one is obliged to expoſe the futility of ſuch authorities when they are made the ſtandard of truth againſt truth itſelf.

When I ſaid that my arguments had not received an anſwer, I did not mean that my book had not been anſwered. It has been treated like the works of much better authors, and been attended both with that abuſe and compliment that are eſſentially neceſſary to flatter a writer with the hopes of not being forgotten. I am very grateful for both; and equally ſatisfied with having offended ſome, and pleaſed others of my readers.

The firſt marks of diſapprobation were conveyed in the Critical Review. I was ſeverely reproved by that monthly court for not having taken due notice of Mr. Guthrie's Hiſtory of England. The charge I acknowledge was juſt.

When I examined the ſtory of Richard the third, it is true that I conſulted the living works of dead authors, not the dead works of living authors. And it ought to be ſome palliation of my offence, that I not only had never ſeen Mr. Guthrie's Hiſtory of England, but had never met with a ſingle perſon that had read it. It had remained a profound ſecret to mortal eyes; or was conſumed by thoſe all-devouring enemies of the ingenious, time and the oven. However, I am ſincerely ſorry for my neglect; and the more ſo, as I find by the review, that my misfortune did not conſiſt in differing with Mr. Guthrie, but in happening to be of the ſame opinion. It ſeems, Mr. Guthrie, long before the appearance of my Doubts, had condemned great part of the traditional hiſtory of Richard as a fable. It was therefore preſumptuous in me to be as ſagacious as ſo inimitable a writer; or a grievous affront not to acknowledge that he had previouſly ſtarted the ſame opinion. Why he ſhould be ambitious of ſingularity I do not know. The more perſons ſee through an abſurdity, the more probable it is that the abſurdity exiſts. Indeed, when an author has compiled our annals, I find he looks on the whole hiſtory of England as his property. It is an invaſion of his freehold to conteſt a ſingle fact that he has occupied. Mr. Guthrie and Mr. Hume aſſert their right to the whole manour. Mr. Guthrie will not ſuffer me to agree with him, nor Mr. Hume to diſagree with him. When they have adjuſted their title between themſelves, I will ſwear to the lawful monarch—in the mean time I hope I may be allowed to treat one of them at leaſt as a pretender.

To the abuſe with which thoſe literary inquiſitors the reviewers have honoured me, I acquieſce with gratitude. Not only in the caſe in queſtion, but on other occaſions, they have obliged me with that cenſure which bad authors, turned to critics, are ſo apt to paſs on better writers than themſelves. I have had the ſatisfaction of ſeing my trifling writings riſe in the favour of the public, in proportion as they have been condemned by the judicious gentlemen who are ſo laborious and kind as for a ſhilling a month to inform their humble auditors what they ſhould think of every book, which the latter never read. May it ever be my fate [ſhould I again attempt to amuſe the public] to paſs through the innoxious flames of ſuch criticiſm; ſecure of loſing no particle of my little merit by being grinned and mouthed at by as groteſque imps, as thoſe that pipe and drum in the pictures of Teniers, to divert, one ſhould think, rather than terrify ſaint Antony!

As I look on abuſe as a flattering tribute paid by wounded or impotent enemies, ſo I am apt to ſuſpect that when an author is profuſe of compliments to his adverſary, he really but laughs in ſecret at his opponent's abilities, and exalts them officiouſly, in order to render his own triumph more conſpicuous.

Next to the capital offence of not having conſulted Mr. Guthrie's departed hiſtory, I ſeem to have diſguſted him or his champions by having treated diſreſpectfully ſome ancient chroniclers, particularly

"Thoſe claſſics of an age that knew of none,"

Ingulphus, Matthew Paris, William of Malmeſbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Hoveden; though by the way I have never mentioned them. It would puzzle me, I am told, to produce a Latin hiſtorian *now alive*, ſuperior to William of Malmeſbury, with regard to ſpirit, ſentiment, and authenticity, nay, in the beauty of compoſition and elegance of diction. It would puzzle me indeed; as, except Buonamici's, I did not know that our modern hiſtories were written in Latin. If they are, I offer them as an oblation one and all to the ſhades of the elegant Ingulphus, and as elegant Mr. Guthrie, the latter of whom for aught I know may have written his hiſtory in Latin too. Nay, from one paſſage, I have ſome ſuſpicion that he may have written it in Greek, the thought being truly Anacreontic. He ſuſpects that the duke of Clarence was not drowned in a butt of malmſey, but died of drinking that wine. The figure is a little bold, and above the common pitch of an antiquary: but poets and antiquaries are equally adventurous in their conjectures; and as the criticiſm is excellent, no doubt it will meet with proper reſpect from all thoſe learned perſons who ſhall re-write our hiſtory.

If it would not be trifling with my readers, I would mention another paſſage containing a thought not leſs new. The critic ſays, that ſir Thomas More never did deſerve *but in death* the name he has obtained for ſincerity and honeſty. How a man can deſerve the character of honeſty in death, who never deſerved it in his life, is totally paſt my comprehenſion.

Having for ſome pages reſented my agreement with him, Mr. Guthrie takes

takes a ſhort turn, and undertakes the condemnation of Richard againſt me, for fear I ſhould not be in the wrong both ways. His chief argument againſt himſelf and me, *that Tirrel certainly murdered the two princes*, is drawn from the propriety of his being a perſon fit for the office. How is this made out? I had ſhown, that, inſtead of being the low tool deſcribed by ſir Thomas More, Tirrel was a man of great note, and in high employment. How does Mr. Guthrie deſtroy this argument? By producing a commiſſion to prove that Tirrel was a much greater man than I had repreſented him, having even in king Edward's time been appointed one of the commiſſioners for exerciſing the office of high conſtable of England. I thankfully accept this evidence againſt ſir Thomas More: it certainly does demonſtrate that Tirrel was not a mean fellow, a comrade of the page, who ſir Thomas ſays recommended him as a fit inſtrument for a ſecret aſſaſſination.——Now let us ſee how I can defend Mr. Guthrie and myſelf againſt Mr. Guthrie.

A clauſe, ſays Mr. Guthrie, was omitted in the renewal of the patent which allowed to the commiſſioners clerks to take down the minutes of the proceedings, &c. *Had not Tirrel*, continues he, *with ſuch a commiſſion, ſome reaſon to think he was ſafe againſt all legal impeachments even in the following reign?* As all Richard's acts were in the following reign deemed the acts of an uſurper, and conſequently cancelled in effect, I ſhould think not. But I cannot from what Tirrel might think deduce any manner of argument for ſhowing that he was the murderer! But, ſays Mr. Guthrie, by the omiſſion of clerks, Tirrel, or whoever the murderer was, had no occaſion to call in any aſſiſtance or clerks. As I am defending Mr. Guthrie as well as myſelf, he will allow us to ſay, that inſtead of argument, this is downright nonſenſe. Does the command over aſſiſtants aid or defeat murder? Or, becauſe a commiſſioner has clerks, is he obliged by law to enjoin them co-operation in murder? *By having no clerks*, ſays he, *he had no occaſion to call in any aſſiſtance.* Suppoſe my lord commiſſioner Tirrel had had clerks, does Mr. Guthrie think they would have ſued him for not employing them in aſſaſſination? But here are words more ſtrange; *Tirrel, or whoever the murderer was.* Mr. Guthrie, then, it ſeems, doubts after all whether Tirrel was the real criminal or not. Obſerve how that very doubt makes him flounder out of one abſurdity into another. By Tirrel's having no clerks, the murderer, *whoever he was*, had no occaſion to call in any aſſiſtance: ergo, if Tirrel was *not* the murderer, whoever was had no occaſion to call in any aſſiſtance,

aſſiſtance, becauſe the lord high conſtable pro tempore happened to have no clerks. Thus do materials but ſerve to overſet a head that knows not how to digeſt them! And this is the hiſtorian that I am cenſured for not having conſulted!

Mr. Guthrie is much happier in the application of materials that he has *not* met with. *The lady Eleanor Butler*, ſays he, *acquitted the king of any promiſe in open court.* This is a bold aſſertion. I would aſk with ſubmiſſion, in what court that cauſe was tried, and where the record exiſts? So indefatigable a hunter after ancient game, no doubt can inform us where he diſcovered the minutes of the trial. Sure he did not adopt this random information from the authors he condemns, and who, he ſays *, *wrote under the influence of the houſe of Lancaſter. Nothing then was thought too mean, however falſe it might be, for flattering the reigning powers.* If Mr. Guthrie is maſter of more authentic intelligence on this article, he will no doubt produce it.

In one point I acknowledge he has corrected me juſtly. I mentioned the duke of Albany being with Richard at York, as a preſumption that Richard was on good terms with the court of Scotland; whereas, ſays Mr. Guthrie, and he is in the right, the duke of Albany lived then in exile, being on bad terms with his brother James the third. I beg the reader to ſubſtract as much weight from the chain of my argument, as this miſtake had made on his mind. Let this recantation evince that I am neither obſtinate nor incorrigible. Had I met with either one fact or argument more in the writings of my opponents of equal weight, I ſhould have yielded with the ſame facility. To adhere to what one cannot maintain, eſpecially on ſo unimportant a ſubject as the hiſtory of Richard, would betray a vanity that expects the world ſhould acquieſce in our weakneſſes or prejudices, and a mind too diſingenuous to acknowledge itſelf capable of miſtakes.

My next adverſary was a very civil gentleman, who did me the honour of anſwering my doubts in a volume as large as my own. He paid me ſo many compliments, that I beg he will draw upon me for the full debt, whenever he has occaſion for the like number.

* Vide Critical Review, No. 145, p. 121, in the note from Guthrie.

Not ſo the third. Determined on the ruin of my work, and at the ſame time diſcreetly allowing ſufficient intervals to his readers to digeſt his cenſures, he retailed them in that vehicle of univerſal and diſtributive juſtice, the London Chronicle. His friends, he ſaid, had indeed perſuaded him to collect the ſcattered leaves into a juſt volume——and he flattered the world with ſome hopes of his compliance. Might I preſume to ſubſcribe their petition, I would entreat him to indulge their wiſhes; eſpecially as he broke off exactly at that part of my work, in which I had placed the ſtrength of my argument. Content however with the ſample he had given of his abilities, he concluded the world would give him credit from what he had done, for what he was able to do. As a ſpecimen of thoſe abilities, I ſhall from many of equally cogent logic ſelect one inſtance. It will ſuffice to ſhow why I am unwilling to encounter ſo tremendous a foe; at the ſame time that I do not feel myſelf ſufficiently warmed by his paſſionate expreſſions to anſwer them with equal fury. Perhaps this author too may have written his hiſtory of England, and cannot forgive my not having quoted it. From the pains-taking compiler, who is twenty-five years in compoſing half a reign, to the garreteer, who transfuſes old hiſtorians into weekly numbers as faſt as his printer can diſpatch them, the cohort of Engliſh hiſtorians is become ſo extenſive a fraternity, that life is not long enough, though we ſhould do nothing but read our own ſtory in their various modifications of it. The paſſage I hinted at is in the Chronicle of March 12, 1768. The critic has diſcovered there that when the hiſtorian ſays prince Edward [ſon of Henry 6th] was murdered by the *ſervants* of Edward the fourth, we may eaſily ſuppoſe he meant the king's *brothers*; for, ſays he, *judiciouſly*, are not the king's *brothers* the king's *ſervants?* Let me aſk this angry and ſhrewd perſon, whether, if he was to read in the Daily Advertiſer that his majeſty went to the opera attended by his *ſervants*, he ſhould underſtand that his majeſty's royal *brothers* walked before his chair? I have heard that omne majus continet in ſe minus; but this is the firſt time I have ſeen that propoſition inverted.—It was a cruel friend that adviſed this author to reprint ſuch lucubrations!

Having diſpatched theſe ſkirmiſhers with perhaps more notice than they deſerved, I muſt now turn to another kind of adverſary, to one from whom I differ with regret, and whoſe talents I cannot encounter without fear: one whoſe knowledge is only excelled by his power of employing it; whoſe ſaga-

city

city may nod, though it cannot be impoſed upon; and who is more able to defend a bad cauſe, than I am to do juſtice to a good one: one who could ſip the muddy ſtreams of Ingulphus and Hoveden, without being intoxicated by them; and who, if it would have ſerved any political purpoſe, could have caſt ſuch a plauſible veil over the deformities of Richard, that my attempt to reſcue his character from obloquy had been needleſs and impotent, when compared with what his maſterly hand would have performed. Grieved I am therefore to think that what his haſte made him neglect, he ſhould not ſuffer to be executed in however inferior a manner by me. Yet what makes *him* averſe from ſeeing *any* king whitewaſhed? Have I violated the aſhes of his favourite martyr, I mean as they are enſhrined in his volumes? The profane Mrs. Macaulay has proved the groſs inſincerity of that monarch. She has detected our author's beloved Clarendon in numberleſs wilful falſehoods, —nay, ſhe has not treated our author himſelf with much ceremony. Yet ſhe remains unanſwered; and her arguments, built on records and inconteſtable authorities, ſeem like a rock to defy his aſſaults. My poor tribute to royalty is the only mite that is rejected. A notice however I cannot but eſteem a ſingular honour, as, amidſt a hoſt of adverſaries of various ſorts, I am the only one to whom I think our author has ever deigned to make a reply. In truth, if the paſſages I am going to examine are to be regarded as a ſpecimen of his polemic talents, he will forgive me I hope for ſaying, that he was not only in the right to ſelect the weakeſt of his adverſaries, but prudent in abſtaining from a warfare in which his greateſt force does not ſeem to lie.

After the firſt guſh of opponents whom I have mentioned, my Doubts ſeemed to have nothing farther to fear but oblivion. I thought my work as much forgotten, as I had forgot my adverſaries. I neither cared about them nor king Richard. How was I ſurpriſed the other day on receiving a preſent of a French Swiſs journal from the learned * author himſelf, in which the firſt thing in the book was a criticiſm on my Doubts.—I call it criticiſm in deference to the author, though the whole, like other reviews, is chiefly compoſed of extracts from my work; and, unlike other reviews, of ſuch a torrent of encomiums on myſelf, as made me bluſh for the miſtaken good-

* Monſ. Diverdun, author of Mémoires litteraires de la Grande Bretagne pour les années 1767, 1768.

nature of the author, and for my own demerit, which is ill entitled to ſuch incenſe. Indeed, any vanity I might have conceived from this panegyric was greatly lowered by a paſſage at the end of the book, in which the author modeſtly owns that he does not much admire the works of doctor Swift. Could I be greatly flattered with the approbation of a gentleman who has ſo little taſte as to diſlike doctor Swift and to admire me? How qualified is this kind perſon to ſit in judgment on books, who gives ſuch a criterion of his diſtinguiſhing faculties!

If I found myſelf overwhelmed with praiſe, I was not leſs aſtoniſhed to find at the end of his criticiſm two or three pages drawn up by Mr. Hume in anſwer to my Doubts, and beſtowed on the journaliſt to help him in pronouncing ſentence. He pronounces it accordingly, and declares me guilty of ſpecious but falſe reaſoning, and decides the victory in favour of Mr. Hume on the evidence collected from the latter's own notes.

The notes thus crept into the world are in French. Many months ago Mr. Hume gave me a ſight of them in Engliſh, and I then told him what I muſt repeat now, that I thought I never ſaw more unſubſtantial arguments. As he is of a different opinion, and as I am now at liberty to take them to pieces, I ſhall make bold to ſhow, that they are not only no anſwer to my reaſonings, which remain in full force, but that, if they are the beſt confutation Mr. Hume can make of my book, it had been wiſer to let it ſink or ſwim as it could, inſtead of heaping conjectures on improbabilities, and thereby leading our readers to ſee, that he not only avoided giving anſwers to my ſtrongeſt arguments, but had raſhly taken up an idle ſtory without examination, and now is at a loſs how to defend it.

Before I enter on the diſcuſſion of Mr. Hume's notes, I muſt make one or two ſhort obſervations. Having remarked how ſhallow the authorities were on which the hiſtory of Richard is built, I thought myſelf warranted to call much of it in queſtion. Buck, Carte, and it ſeems Mr. Guthrie, had preceded me in rejecting the received account. Some new lights had accidentally flowed in. Still I propoſed my ſentiments but as *doubts*—and yet have been told that I have not *proved* my hypotheſis. If I had *proved* it, I ſhould not have *doubted*. My adverſaries on the other ſide ſeem to think that aſſertions and repetitions will ſerve for proofs, where facts and reaſons are